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THE NEY FAMILY

THE DESCENDANTS OF PATRICK & ANNE NEY

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THE NEY FAMILY

(THE DESCENDANTS OF PATRICK & ANNE NEY)

A Record Compiled by John C. Ney

With Much Help from Many Others

PREFACE

Before beginning to research and write this family history, my first question had to be: Why am I doing so? It is a perfectly reasonable question, given that all families are both important and unimportant — important to family members; unimportant to others. And with rare exceptions, all family histories fall into the same division. Very few American families — such as the Adamses and a handful of others with many generations of distinguished participation in the country's political and cultural development — have genuine general importance, and can survive close scrutiny.

Perhaps the most compelling reason to do a family history is a negative one: If it is not done, something of possible importance to everyone in the family — and to future generations — will be missing, and, perhaps cannot be done later when certain sources are gone and the recollections of certain individuals have died with them. Of course, young family members are normally indifferent to family history; it is the middle-aged and the elderly — especially the elderly — who take an interest in it. But the young will themselves be old some day and may wish to know about the family, and be disappointed to find that no such history exists and that the records and impressions can no longer be found. And who can say with assurance that future generations will not be interested? After consideration, do not all of us — for we are all members of some family — tend to assume that a family's past will have meaning, even importance, to living and future members of that family?

So there is a rationale for all family histories, including this one. Even so, the notion of doing it was not original with me but came from my brother Edward. He suggested that because I am a writer and interested in family background, I would be the obvious choice for a project he thought desirable. I recognized inevitability when he made the suggestion and accepted.

(I should point out that my interest in family background on its own would not have produced a family history as such. My interest has been purely personal, a variant of trying to explain the present through an understanding of the past.)

This, then, is the result. I have learned that the real work in compiling a family history is in the research rather than the writing. Quite a bit of the research — especially in Ireland — has been a dead end. On the other hand, there have been unexpected discoveries, and even the exploration of the dead ends has been rewarding.

At the outset, it is necessary to stress familial modesty. I have not written a family history to claim directly or indirectly that the Neys are an important family in any of the usual senses, because they are not. On the surface, they are not markedly different from the descendants of any other immigrants fleeing the Irish Famine or similar conditions elsewhere in Europe in the 1840s. If money and power are the key American criteria, they are certainly not as 'successful' — at least over time and as a family — as the Mackays, Cudahys, Floods, Kennedys, etc. It is true that they have been somewhat more successful than the average, with three lawyers in the first generation after arrival, and then succeeding generations with moderately successful professional, business, and military careers. And, finally, with Ed Ney's impressive success in advertising and public affairs. But still, compared to the Irish-American dynastic plutocrats cited above, not publicly remarkable as a family (Ed's success is individual). And compared with authentically imposing American families — Adamses, Roosevelts, etc. — wholly insignificant.

(It is sometimes claimed today that times have changed, and that we no longer judge by material success to the extent we did in the 1800s and early 1900s. I confess that I do not know — sometimes that claim does seem true, and then again, a few years later, it does not.)

On the other hand, all families have their individuality, and the Neys are no exception. The first quality which seems to set them apart is their divergence from the Irish Catholic norm. (Assuming they were such, which, as we shall see, may not be certain.) On the whole, Irish Catholic immigrants were gregarious and urban, 'Irish' in appearance and behavior, etc. The Neys were non-gregarious loners who went to the cold remoteness of the Upper Middle West. They didn't even look Irish — see, especially, photographs of Judge Ney (more German than anything else), Christopher Ney, John J., etc. — and they didn't act Irish. As shall be seen, this divergence may be explained through the endless invasions of Ireland over many centuries by Vikings, Normans, English, and Scots, and even by later immigration to Ireland from Europe, especially Germany. This unIrishness was underlined in succeeding generations. Of four sons in the first generation born in

the United States, three married non-Irish wives. This pattern was continued in later generations, leading to infusions of English, Scots, and other strains.

(Marriages of any kind dilute the original line — via a geometric progression by generations: in the fifth generation following the progenitor, his influence has sunk to 1/32. However, in the generational history of many families, the tone set by the progenitor — see the Adamses, for example — can dominate for generations despite the technical arithmetic. And this has been true of the Neys, too.)

The second quality has been brains. Most Ney family members have shown high intelligence according to any of the usual definitions and testing procedures.

The third and perhaps most interesting quality is difficult to define. Perhaps it is simplest to say that there have been indications of a blind urge to see, to know, to understand in some fashion, as well as to succeed in the usual ways.

This was particularly apparent, as shall be seen, in the life of Christopher William Ney, 1869-1927. He combined early career success with a later withdrawal from the world, saying, toward the end of his life, 'I am part of the sadness of America, but that, too, has its place.' The quote has poetic power, and, perhaps, more meaning to us today than the bland sentiments of his untroubled contemporaries.

It is also necessary at the outset to be clear about the very name Ney. There are two important facts in this regard:

The first is that very nearly all persons named Ney are of German origin. According to *The World Book of Neys*, there are a mere 11 Ney households in all Ireland: 6 in the Republic, and 5 in Northern Ireland. There are 1,473 Ney households in Germany, so the Irish Neys are less than 1% (actually, .75%) of the German total. Using that percentage on the 1,169 Ney households in the United States would give only 9 households of Irish ancestry, with all the rest of German descent, overwhelmingly from the Palatinate (along the Rhine, near France). In fact, I can find no Neys of Irish origin in America except among my own relatives. Only 1 American Ney in 100 is of Irish descent.

Some Neys in this family have looked for a tie to the famous Marshal Ney. Many articles and at least one book have been written claiming that Marshal Ney was not executed in 1815, as eyewitnesses and all reputable historians report as fact, but somehow escaped to America. In various assumed identities, the Marshal is supposed to have lived to an old age. The most popular location for this imposture has been North Carolina under the name of Peter Ney, which matches a Peter Ney in this family's hearsay account of immigrant Neys. But the impossibility of the Marshal having escaped at all is almost certain. In addition, the dates are wrong — as far as we know, no Ney in this family came to this country before 1840, whereas the Marshal's imposter showed up around 1820. Pertinently, Marshal Ney was born of German parents in Saarlouis, on the French-German border, and spoke German as a child. Ney is not a French name; the *World Book of Neys* has no Ney listings in France whatsoever.

There are a few well-known Neys in the arts: The sculptor Elisabet Ney, 1833-1907, who was famous in her native Germany before coming to this country in 1871. Supposedly, she was a collateral relative of Marshal Ney. In Europe she did sculptures of

celebrities ranging from Bismarck to Schopenhauer; in America, she is famous for her statues of Sam Houston and Stephen F. Austin. There is an Elisabet Ney Museum in Austin, Texas. There was also the noted German pianist Elly Ney, 1882-1967. Richard Ney, the actor (*Mrs. Miniver*, etc.) who later became an authority on finance and investing, and author of *The Wall Street Jungle* and other books, has Austrian forebears. (Incidentally, he is a friend of both Edward and John Ney.) As can be seen, all these Neys are of German or Austrian descent.

The second fact is the rarity of the name in Ireland and the likelihood of it being a variant spelling of a more common root. Even though the name does exist in Ireland in small numbers, genealogists claim that it is only a variant of any one of the homophonous spellings which exist in much greater numbers: Neagh, Nae, etc., and especially Nee, by far the most common, especially in Galway and spilling over into the adjacent county of Offaly where Shannonbridge, the purported Ney town of origin, is located. (No matter the spelling, it is almost always pronounced 'Nay'.)

The name could have been changed in immigration, of course, but then what was it in Shannonbridge? The only way it could be German, it seems, would have been through immigration from that country. These and other possibilities are considered in the text.

Several questions came up in considering the organization of this family history:

The past is obviously important in any such project, but in what aspects? Is a family history solely genealogical, or are there other general aspects of importance — i.e., should a history of an American family have some background on the country of origin as well as on the American locales?

Is the past determining? And if so, to what degree?

If you are from a particular family which derives from a particular culture, ethnic strain, or religion, to what degree are any of those qualities and characteristics of importance in any context to the family's contemporary and future descendants?

Current American fashion wagers all on nurture over nature. But outside the United States, the overwhelming majority of the world, especially in Asia and Africa, believes just the opposite: the past determines. Are they wrong, or are the Americans wrong? Even in America, not all believe the nurture gospel — certainly not those with Asian and Latino/Hispanic and Jewish and (in general) Mediterranean and Roman Catholic roots. In fact, the only group which denies the past (at least in public) is the 'Wasp/Anglo', and those from the other groups who have graduated into the higher reaches of the Wasp/Anglo establishment and must become nurturists in order to remain there.

But even the Wasp/Anglos are subject to certain rules. When young, family means very little or nothing. As we age, it becomes more important. As T. S. Stribling has a late-middle-aged character named Knoblett say in *The Store*, 'By the time men get to be of our age . . . about all any new acquaintance can do is remind them of somebody else. . . . at times I have thought that is why we die. We become more and more intricately linked with the past, until finally we drift completely into it . . . and we are dead.' We know that the personal past has been determining for many writers — see T. S. Eliot — and that without an understanding of from whence one came, one cannot understand one's present and future. Then there is Santayana's remark about those who do not understand

the past being doomed to repeat it. (That remark is often quoted, which does not mean that it is generally believed, but indifference does not invalidate it.)

So I had to ask myself: Does the past (including all family and individual pasts) disappear in the United States, or is it (and are they) determining?

I personally think the past determines to some extent. Not wholly, of course, and very little in the case of certain individuals — usually those who understand and acknowledge their pasts quite completely and can thus go beyond them. And that we are driven back onto our pasts as we age, precisely as Stribling's character describes the process. (Just before he died, my father, lying shriveled in bed at Jekyll Island, suddenly said, 'I see myself with my father in a buggy, crossing the Wapsipinnicon [the river which passes through Independence, Iowa].' His mind was quite clear, and he was not delirious. It was just the past exercising its inexorable pull.) And that without the past we have no common language. Or much which can be understood even though unspoken.

Not so long ago, many Americans were anxious to be rid of their pasts. In addition to the notion that the speed with which they could move to success was in inverse proportion to the amount of excess baggage they carried, there was also embarrassment over humble and possibly unattractive origins. Best to be rid of the past, even to deny it, in order to make a fresh start. But the past, like nature (indeed, is it not nature at its most fundamental!) has a way of refusing to stay buried. And it now seems to me that more Americans are accepting the reality of their pasts. The past-less condition once considered so desirable is now questionable.

And in considering famous American families — a more impersonal approach than considering one's own — it would seem to be obvious that the country of origin has been of importance, even of determination. The Washingtons and Lees and Adamses had to have come from England, the Kennedys from Ireland, and so on.

With all this in mind, I have, as shall be seen, included some descriptions of the Ireland where the Neys were formed, and the American Upper Middle West where they were re-formed as Americans, and, later, some personal recollections. These descriptions are drawn from computer and tape-recorder journals I have kept while traveling, and personal notes. Today, none of the members of this Ney family live in the Middle West, but to some degree and in some way, I suggest, the Middle West is part of us, just as being originally from Ireland is.

The journal entries are transcribed as they were made, to keep the freshness of the impressions. In the text, those not dealing with Neys and Ney research and Irish history as such are double-indented and set in a slightly smaller type size.

I could have omitted this material, but have included it for two reasons: I think it enhances the bare bones of family history, gives it texture, makes it more real, richer rather than poorer. And if the material is not used, impressions which might be of interest to later readers would be irretrievably lost.

The point of this little history is the formative past, especially the lives of the deceased as a partial explanation of our background. There had to be some sort of arbitrary

demarcation point between the end of that formative past and the present, and the year 1974, the year in which John J. Ney died, has been selected. Details on the living — Ed and I, and our children and grandchildren — are given in the Today section, but only briefly. The consideration of the living can be done when we, in turn, are gone.

For the same reason, photographs are confined to the dead. This is not a yearbook about the present, but a look into the past to suggest from whom and from what circumstances we are descended. The photographs have been selected to show the subjects in their best light, as the ancients all felt the dead should be remembered.

Observations and opinions are distinguished from factual material throughout. Nothing known to be hearsay or unsupported is offered as fact. On the other hand, a family history is not the place for gratuitous downgrading, and weaknesses and character flaws as such — that is, with no bearing on the family as a whole — are omitted. The dead have no advocates, and in a family sense we honor that vulnerability by presenting our own dead — our ancestors — in the light in which we ourselves would like to be presented, at our best rather than our worst. This is not hypocrisy, but realistic courtesy. Eulogies at a funeral are just that because anything else would be out of place, and family histories follow the same esthetic determination.

Family histories are notorious dust-gatherers, usually written in a dry, uninteresting style — especially boring for young people. (And, it must be presumed, for any readers from future generations!) This is an attempt to do it differently, not only fleshing out the facts with aspects of the pasts in Ireland and America in which these family members lived, but also in writing casually insofar as possible rather than formally. I have tried to write so that future readers, especially the young, will say, 'They were alive once, just as we are now, and they talk to us across the generations as though we were together now.'

Incidentally, it is certain that if these family records had been established years ago, even as far back as the late 1800s when Patrick K. Ney was still alive and able to remember details of Ireland, this little history would be far more inclusive than it is. By the same token, if this history had not been done now, many of the memories and facts it contains would not be available a hundred years from now for future generations.

The organization of the history is simple and sequential:

I. Preface

II. Ireland

> Family origins up to about 1840. Descriptions of pertinent aspects of Ireland derived from the past and the present.

III. The Middle West

Family history from 1840s until 1920s. Descriptions of pertinent aspects of the Middle West derived from the past and the present.

IV. The East

From the mid-1920s, when John J. Ney moved from St. Paul to New York, until his death in 1974. Covers his career and his family, as well as collateral relatives.

V. Today

From 1974 until the present time. Covers Edward N. and John C. Ney, their children and grandchildren, and collateral relatives.

VI. Four Appendices:

A. A genealogical chart, and a map of the Shannonbridge area.

B. Other Ney lines

C. Family background of Marie Noonan Ney

D. Sources.

IRELAND

Eternal is the fact that the human creature born
in Ireland and brought up in its air is Irish

— George Bernard Shaw

The point of the research in Ireland was to trace the Ney family prior to 1821, the year in which Patrick Ney, the eventual founding emigrant, was born. And also to find the records and even the descendants of collateral relatives of Patrick.

Before beginning that research, either by letter or in person, there was a great deal which had to be done in the United States.

At the start, all I had to go on was family hearsay. My father had told me that he understood that Patrick Ney had sailed from Cork (Cobh) in the early 1840s, accompanied by two brothers: Peter and Michael.

Virgil Ney, my father's cousin, said the family originated in a town called Shannonbridge, some sixty miles west of Dublin, more or less in the center of Ireland on the River Shannon.

These two bits of information were all I had.

I started the search at the Boca Raton, Florida, Family Center, which serves as a branch extension of the Mormon Genealogical Record Center, in Salt Lake City. The Mormon Center is by far the best place in the United States — if not the world — to start any family search. Computerized records from every possible locality in America and Europe are catalogued and available in all branches. Later the search was extended to specialized areas and genealogists in Iowa, Indiana, New York City, and other American sources, and in Ireland itself. (Sources, and some details of this process are given in Appendix D.)

As will be seen, the research was fairly successful in tracing Patrick Ney after he arrived in this country, and in tracing his descendants, generation by generation.

However, in order to trace back in Ireland, I needed to find some if not all of the following: Patrick Ney's date and place of birth; the names of his siblings and parents, and their dates and places of birth. In this, I was not as successful. Despite a great deal of work involving quite a few people, we could find no more than: Patrick's date of birth; his parents' names; and the name of one brother, Edward, who also came to the United States. These facts were all found in the United States. Despite exhaustive searches of the Irish computer records as transmitted from the Mormon Center, nothing definite was learned from that source.

(I was assured, however, that many of the Irish parish records have not been put on computer and so cannot be examined except page-by-page on-site in Ireland. I was also warned that many Roman Catholic church records prior to the early 1800s do not exist, having been forbidden by the English authorities of the time, along with civil records. In addition, sales of land and other sources before 1800 are sketchy at best in any European country for the middle and working classes; in Ireland, they are almost non-existent except for Protestant landowners. Despite these drawbacks, the computer printout searches were not wasted time, because a picture of Nees, Neys, etc., throughout Galway and adjoining counties emerged.)

Another complication, as noted in the Preface, was the spelling of the name Ney. Although it does exist in Ireland, it could well be a variant spelling of the more common Nee. Or Nae, Nea, Neagh, etc. There was also the possibility that Ney was an offshoot of another name, perhaps quite different, in some sort of clan/sept arrangement. I was to be impressed, in the end, by the extent of genealogical possibilities, and the maze they created.

If this family name was changed to Ney from some other variation, the next question was where and when? In Ireland, or in passage to or entry into the United States?

Along with researching all possible leads in the United States, I also wrote to a number of sources in Ireland. These included the Chief Herald's Office, and several genealogists, and the eleven Ney households (from *The World Book of Neys)* in the Republic and Northern Ireland. Only one Ney of those eleven responded — Frank, an unemployed stonemason, with whom I had an amusing if unproductive correspondence.

To speed up the process, I needed help from a professional genealogist before going to Ireland. From a list of those approved by the Chief Herald's Office, I chose one Harry McDowell. I wrote and we agreed that he would do what he could on an initial search (for a relatively modest fee), after which I would take over. He would be meeting me with his results on my arrival in Ireland.

By the time I went to Ireland in the summer of 1994, I had the following information:

FACTUAL:

The original Ney of whom there is record, Patrick Kieran Ney, was born June 1, 1821, in Ireland, and died in Dubuque, Iowa, June 26, 1892. (Source: his obituaries, and the dates in his burial records in Independence, Iowa.) His parents were Patrick and Rose Ney, and he had a brother named Edward. (Source: The church records of his brother Edward's marriage in Indiana in 1856, and Edward's obituary.) Patrick emigrated from Ireland to the United States in the 1840s. (Source: his obituaries and New York City marriage certificate.)

Incidentally, his life in the United States after he arrived in the 1840s is fairly well-documented, as shall be seen.

PROBABLE:

He was born in what was then Kings County, Ireland, now Offaly County. (Source: According to his Civil War enlistment record in the Union Army, his place of birth is given as Kings County, Indiana. However, there is not, nor has there ever been, a Kings County in Indiana, so it is likely this error was a substitution of Indiana for Ireland as his birth site.)

This leads to the further probability that he was born in the town of Shannonbridge, as indicated in family hearsay, because it is located in Offaly (formerly Kings) County. Also, Shannonbridge is just across the River Shannon from Galway, where the majority of the few Neys and many Nees, etc., have lived for the past 175 years covered by the computerized records.

When Patrick emigrated, he was accompanied by his brother, Edward. (Source: the fact that he and Edward were living in Arcola, Indiana, in the 1850s. From Edward's obituary — he died in 1885 — we know that he was born in Ireland in 1825, so that he was just four years younger than Patrick and thus a likely companion in emigration. If he did not accompany Patrick, he came soon after.)

POSSIBLE:

According to one of Patrick Ney's obituaries, he came to this country with four brothers and his mother. This would seem doubtful, because there is no record of such numbers in Indiana, especially in death records. There is, however, a record of a Peter Ney in Indiana in the 1850s. But not in Arcola, and with no proof of relationship through obituaries, etc.

From family hearsay, as noted: two brothers, Michael and Peter, accompanied Patrick Ney from Ireland to America, and the three sailed from Cork (Cobh). But searches had

failed to find any other Neys from Ireland on any of the available passenger manifests of the 1840s; nor on any of the entry records of American ports. Waterbury, Connecticut, and North Carolina were mentioned as places where Michael and Peter might have settled. This would seem doubtful — no trace of them or their issue has been found. Nor has any record of Civil War service or United States naturalization for any such names been found.

According to one of Patrick Ney's obituaries, he went back to Ireland in the 1870s to visit 'the scenes of his childhood.' Irish experts say most first-generation immigrants did not make enough money in their lifetimes to afford such a trip, so those few who did were often written up in local Irish newspapers on their triumphant returns; this could be an important clue.

This was not much information, especially after all the work which had been put in, but it was all that could be found — a slim bag, but it would have to do.

Using it as a foundation on this trip, I would be trying to find:

What part of Ireland did this Ney family come from?

Is Shannonbridge the correct town of origin?

If so, are there any parish or other records of the birth of a Patrick Kieran Ney in 1821? And of any other Neys, including his parents and siblings?

If dates — birth, death, marriage — can be found for his parents, how far back can the line be traced?

For how far back does the spelling of the name remain Ney? If there has been a change, when did it occur, and what was it changed from? Can that primary name be traced back?

Any other family history?

Economic and social status?

Anecdotal material, if it exists?

Is there any newspaper record of Patrick Ney's return to Ireland in the late 1800s?

Collateral relatives, etc., ?

In addition to factual material, an understanding of the background was needed, along with descriptions of Shannonbridge and the surrounding area today; of what it was like in the 1840s; of the conditions which led to the massive emigrations; of Ireland itself, then and now; of collateral relatives, living as well as dead.

On this trip to Ireland I kept a running record on a tape recorder and a laptop computer. There is, I think, a freshness to this approach which would be lost — especially in the notes and random observations, and descriptions of Ireland itself — in transcribing them into more formal English, so I have left them as they were after necessary editing for obvious errors. Later additions are in brackets. As noted in the Preface, general impressions (as distinguished from Ney material, Irish history, and specific contemporary conditions) are double-indented and set in a slightly smaller type size. Without this material, I do not think the reader's understanding of Ireland and feeling for its people and past would be as complete.

Land at Shannon only 3 hours late. Throw luggage into rented car — expensive compared to American car rentals — and take off on left-hand side of the road. Surprising that it only takes a few minutes to adjust. Well, adjust partially — always plenty of backsliding.

Country beautiful, going up from Shannon to the town of Birr, not far from Shannonbridge. Scudding clouds, mist. Green, of course, but also woods, beautiful old trees. Am spending night at Tullanisk, country house suggested by Harry McDowell. It's one of about 25 such houses in Ireland where owners take guests. Not that expensive. Turns out to be impressive Georgian pile built c. 1750, standing on 2000 acres. Was dower house for Birr Castle, demesne of which dominates Birr proper. Hosts are the Gossips (sic), George and Susan. English. Hard workers, and have put a lot in on place.

Tullanisk well done. 16-foot ceilings, huge rooms, stone foyer. Antiques, big beds, good rugs, big drawing room, big dining room. Before dinner, drinks in drawing room, turf fire going. Other guests: English, Anglo-Irish and French couples. Pleasant company. We proceed to dinner at the enormous table and it is superb. Some prawn dish and then lamb, and it turns out that Gossip is the chef. He comes in at the end of the meal in chef's garb and takes a modest bow.

That night, read a book on the vanishing houses (old, large) and castles of Ireland. With photographs. The toll in the last 100 years has been terrific. Many abandoned, many torched by resentful peasants. Depressing.

The next morning, I meet with Harry McDowell, the genealogist. He turns out to be a pleasant man, 60-ish, Anglo-Irish, family in Ireland for 300 years, lives in Kildare. He was in publishing in London for years, and now has come back into Irish retirement. He has done what he can on the Ney background and fills me in.

In essence, he has come up empty, despite considerable searching. In his notes, I find a quotation from Fr. Patrick Woulfe, the ultimate Irish authority, which gives an idea of the inherent confusion:

O'Nee, O'Nea, O'Ney, O'Knee, Nee, Knee, (Needham, Neville)
(des of Nia — champion) The name of this ancient Kerry family who were originally seated in the neighborhood of Tralee, but in later times were 'erenaghs' of Knockpatrick, near Foynes, in County Limerick. The name is now most common in West Galway, where it is sometimes Needham. In Kerry and Limerick, where it is now very rare, it is always 'Neville'.

We go together to nearby Shannonbridge, the quiet little town where Patrick Ney is supposed to have been born. It is unexceptional. There is a bridge here across the River Shannon to Galway, with what appear to be abandoned minor fortifications on the Galway side. We go to the rectory, find the priest and explain our quest. He tells us he has no records before 1826, so the trail is cold for birth of Patrick Ney. We look through the old tomes for anything on any Neys post-1826. Nothing. How could this be possible? Even after Patrick and whatever brothers left, there must have been some behind, and they should have birth-marriage-death records. So should his parents. There is nothing on Nee or any other spelling, either. Perplexing and disappointing morning.

Over lunch, McDowell thaws out when he finds I can smile with him at genealogical snobbery. He has had to be careful with many American clients trying to find (or even fake) connections to gentry and nobility.

On that basis, can any of us really take family stuff that seriously? Very few American families are truly distinguished longterm and worth a look backwards — in New England, the Adamses, Emersons, etc.; in Virginia, up until the Civil War, Washingtons, Lees, etc. But the average American family is hardly worth examination. This exclusion includes the great plutocratic post-Civil War families — great because they made money, but not great in any other way. And most American families of socalled distinction are one-shot affairs — one President, even if Lincoln, without continuing to produce distinguished men and women of any sort — and then they're gone forever. So in that sense, most Americans are much like each other. They go along, push up a few outstanding people, and make it into the middle or upper class. The Neys are no different. They belong to the haves, but as Yogi Berra would say, so does everyone else you know. So . . . what?

Naturally, this omits the argument that one great and enduring factor in American life is the division between those immigrants who make it soon after arrival and those who don't. Statistically, the Irish as an ethnic group are supposed to have done better than any other. The English, Scots, etc., have more at the top proportionally, but also more at the bottom.

All that said, there still remains the legitimate interest in forebears for themselves alone as part of the present, the interest devoid of trying to improve status.

After lunch, we drive the few miles to Clonmacnoise, which would have been the Ney family church and burial place had they lived in Shannonbridge. It is one of the great ruins of Ireland. Or anywhere. Founded as a monastery by St. Kieran in 545, it was the burial site of the Irish kings of Connaught and Tara. Standing along the Shannon, it was plundered by Vikings and others who came up that river from the 900s on. Now there are ruins of several churches and temples, and a number of enormous and elaborately carved stone crosses — one about 12 feet high — in the Celtic style, with the stone circle around the intersection of the cross. An air of peace and dignity pervade the site, a whiff of the days when Ireland was Western civilization's lonely guardian in the Dark Ages. Heartening to imagine that if Neys lived near here, this lovely and inspiring place was their church. Patrick's middle name was Kieran, lending support to that notion on the assumption that he might have been so named because of the proximity of St. Kieran's monastery.

Clonmacnoise is a great tourist attraction and always crowded, but the curator gives us some time. Although most of the graves, which date from the mists of time to the present, are cataloged, we can find no mention of any Neys. But he tells us we are free to look for headstones in the uncatalogued sections. So we spend a couple of hours searching for any variation of the name, but without success. However, the place is wonderful . . . the ancient structures, the pale sky, the rough turf, the beautiful old headstones . . . . We finally give up, but I shall be back. To look some more, but also just to be there.

Say goodbye to Harry in later afternoon. Now I am on my own.

First have to find a place to use as base. Look in Shannonbridge and the other small towns nearby. Pick a B & B near Banagher.

> Owners away, place being run by Irish girl, Fiona. Hardworking, does absolutely everything and remains cheerful. Twenties. Long hair frizzled, evidently the Irish style, good smile, attractive, eyes strangely yellowish. Wants to go to Australia, 'at least for a year or so.' Hardworking, nice (in best sense), would make a man a fine wife. If she can find one.
>
> Irish girls of a certain type talk directly to men in a way that very few girls anywhere else do. Not at all flirtatious, quite the contrary. As equals in a very real (not women's lib) way. Self-deprecating, wise in their way, good company, easy.

> In the evening, Fiona asks me, 'And what is it you're doin' here in Ireland?'
> 'Researching family history.'
> 'Oh, you're Irish, then?'
> 'Mostly.'
> 'I wouldn't have taken you for such.'
> 'No?'
> 'Most of the American Irish who come are . . . braggin', you know, about bein' Irish.'
> 'Which you real Irish don't.'
> 'Lord, no. We know better. Bein' Irish is an affliction.'
> 'That's what my ancestor evidently thought, too, so he left.'
> 'Durin' the Famines?'
> 'Right.'
> Fiona shakes her head. 'Those were times, I do imagine.'

Talking to her makes me wonder again if Ireland is a determining factor in the American Irish.

Which leads to more questions: To what degree is being from Ireland (or anywhere else) determining no matter what the individual thinks — in other words, is there a determining reality outside the individual? To what degree is the individual's belief that it does matter from whence his family came determining?

Assuming that the past is important, how far back should it be probed in a family history?

In a history of any American family is the country of origin — from which the family-founding emigrant departed — of importance? Answers might range from 'Of no importance' to 'Of paramount importance.'

In the case of the Neys, I think the question is how important and interesting is Ireland itself? (Especially in light of the given Ney non-Irishness, an important clue which is considered later.)

Americans of European descent often seem to think that the European country of origin has no significance. Once in America they are American. In this scenario, a contemporary German from a family which has been in the United States for 200 years no longer thinks of himself as of German origin. If, for the sake of the illustration, this German's original family name of Busch has been modified to Bush over the years and he is asked if he is any relation to former president George Bush, he may well shrug and

say, 'Maybe.' He will rarely say, 'No, because I am of German origin and George Bush is not.'

In any case, Fiona does not seem a loser because her ancestors did not flee to America. Quite the contrary.

> Most Irish pale. And remote behind their blarney. And no matter the past, peaceful now — the popularly attributed pugnacity must be a characteristic assumed in America. They will tell you what they think you want to hear, as most people who have been dominated for a long time will do. Hard to read them. Not attractive, mostly. I have no sense of empathy, or relationship. (There are exceptions, of course.) The country can be beautiful, but could not live here. Atrocious climate. Hasn't rained, but always cloudy and cool. So little sun here that lettuce, tomatoes, etc., either won't grow or are stunted. Is this true of Scotland, too? Can't remember. Do remember Scotland as far more compatible, both the land and the people.

Next day, go to the churches around Shannonbridge — Cloghan, Belmont, Ferbane, Lemanaghan, and Banagher — to go through their records. Tedious business, because must find the priest in each, make an appointment, and then return to go through the records. Dead ends, just like Shannonbridge.

In the coming and going, see a lot of commercial peat operations around Shannonbridge. Acres of peat are stripped of topsoil and leveled; then motorized machines peel off a few inches of the peat, which is dried and compressed into neat, stackable bricks and sold for fuel. Expensive, I'm told. But gives off fine smell when burning. The operation rather gives the whole area the final shove into a high position on the list of places where one would not like to have to spend the rest of one's life.

But Shannonbridge has never been a tourist attraction. From the 1844 *Parliamentary Gazetteer*:

> The Shannon stagnates along the western boundary [of the parish of Clonmacnoise]; and the dismal bog-ditch of the Blackwater lies like an enormous snake along the . . . southern boundary . . . About 3240 acres of the parochial surface are hilly and craggy land, incapable of tillage, but serviceable for pasture; and about 7000 acres are bog . . . chiefly waste, flat, cold, and dismal . . . Nearly the whole surface of the district has a naked, dreary, monotonous, and repulsive appearance.
>
> The solitary hopelessness of the bog is all around; and nothing interrupts the waste but the pipe of the curlew as it whistles over the morass . . . If ever there was a picture of grim and hideous repose, it is the flow of the Shannon from Athlone to [Shannonbridge].

The next day in Birr, see a stationer's shop with the name NEE emblazoned on its sign. Go in and find a most pleasant man and wife running the place. Explain my dilemma(s), and they tell me there are a lot of Nees in Ireland; in fact, they were at a Nee family gathering in Galway the year before — hundreds of Nees attending. I should go there and talk to the head of the clan, James Nee. They give me his address in a coastal

hamlet, warn me it's difficult to find. I decide to go — perhaps he can shed some light on what is beginning to seem an insoluble riddle.

As we talk, in come a couple of girls in their early twenties who turn out to be relatives of the shop owners, Nee girls from New York City on holiday in Ireland. They tell me New York is full of Nees, and that they have never met a Ney. They were at last year's Nee gathering and give the impression that most of the Nees there were American.

Go back to Clonmacnoise, and wander again through the various cemeteries. I look for Ney in vain again, but the place has a magical pull, and it is time well spent. It is also a good place to think — or rather, where thoughts come unbidden. Especially thoughts on Ireland:

Irish history in nutshell: First, the pagan, druid natives. Had fairly sophisticated system . . . high kings at Tara, druid priests, etc., legal system. Then Christianized and had — see Toynbee — 'abortive' civilization, guardians of the Western (European) traditions. And, in addition, Irish monks went forth and Christianized much of Europe. From 900s on, Vikings raided, settled in, founded Dublin. Finally driven out, but left plenty of byblows. Then came 12th century Normans from England. Aristocrats, also Christians, intermarried with native 'princesses', etc. Then in 16th century Henry VIII sent post-Reformation Protestant nobles and dispossessed the old Catholic Norman-Irish aristocracy unless they turned Protestant. About half did. The other half went down into dispossession with their people. (Choosing the faith cost the Catholic aristocracy a great deal; it cost the Irish peasants everything as they slid into near-slavery and appalling poverty. Perhaps worst of all, they rejected modern ('tainted') thought for centuries and ended up in ignorance.) The Protestant nobles had relatives who tagged along — like the Shaws who came from Yorkshire, etc. Important: one way or another, Ireland had aristocrats at top (Irish or Norman-Irish, or Anglo-Irish), and peasants at bottom. Aristocrats need and like peasants, so they got along even while not getting along. From the 1600s, not a great deal of byblowing with the local Celts, except at a high level, but over the centuries the cumulative total not insignificant. Different story in Northern Ireland, however, where the English planted Scots in the 1600s. They were peasants themselves, and so could not get along with the native peasants, and the rancor persists to this day. The Scots peasants, far more industrious than the native Irish, became small businessmen and ship builders. The Irish peasants, who could appreciate if not applaud aristocrats, despised the bourgeois Scots, who reciprocated. Intermarriage and interbreeding held to minimum. End of nutshell.

Plenty of characters in the past. Grace O'Malley, 1530-1603, known as the pirate queen, whose privateers preyed on the English in Galway Bay. First married to Donal O'Flaherty, with castles in Connemara, two sons and a daughter (married at 16); then to Iron Richard Burke (from the Anglo-Norman de Burgo). She divorced him in 1566, but kept his castle. In 1574 she fought off an English siege of her castle. Her son by Burke was captured by the English and taken to England, but the redoubtable Grace went there and successfully petitioned Elizabeth I for his release. (Charles I made him Viscount Mayo in 1627.) *Quelle femme, quelle reine*! She spent her childhood in the castle by the quay on Clare Island. I should go there. I should write about her. So much

more real than what passes today. In Ireland as well as out of it. A touch of her in Diana Mitford (Guinness) Mosley.

Certainly Ireland a combination of piety/learning and fighting. No place in Europe, with the possible exception of the Balkans, has been as materially worthless but so fought over. Endlessly. Could see Ireland as the Palestine of Europe. Starts with the formal religiosity of the Dark Ages, the monkishness etc. You're conscious of the past here as alive in the people as well as the ruins, which you aren't in most European countries, where the people are just as consumed by consumerism as the Americans. Well, almost. You hear a lot of English people here say being in Ireland now is like going back to England before the war. Don't know if that's quite true — it's from the Protestant/materialistic angle — but there you are.

Nothing else like Ireland in all Europe. Shaw said Ireland a holy country, and for about 600 years its principal business was monastery-ing and producing beautiful manuscripts and saints who went forth and Christianized most of Europe. See Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island* in which he presents Irish holy man, Father Keegan (Shaw himself?). Holy man, men, to come, or was Shaw it, the last Irish saint?

Shaw quote: Irish so stupid in their intelligence, English so intelligent in their stupidity.

My Ireland — I don't care about Irish peasants, but about the great Anglo-Irish writers and wits — Swift, Sheridan, Congreve, Burke, Wilde, Yeats, Shaw, etc. They were so different from what they would have been had their families remained in England. Most of them passionately Irish, never thought of themselves as 'English'. Despised the English (in many cases, distant relatives who had remained there) as slowwitted, selfish, hopelessly materialistic. Many hated the English occupation, and became Irish patriots and the leaders in the fight for an independent Ireland. They also developed a distinctive style, a way of seeing things in the greatest sense of the comic. All modern, even as far back as Swift. All models of how to deal with the contemporary world. They always found their world comic, and they show the way to dealing with this one.

Back in Shannonbridge next day. According to the 1844 *Parliamentary Gazetteer*, Shannonbridge at that time was *both* a village on the Kings County side of the Shannon, and a 'fortified military station' on the Galway side, with the bridge connecting the two.

> The village is of recent origin . . . apart from the adjoining garrison, it is a place of small importance . . . The environs of Shannonbridge are . . . exceedingly dreary. Population in 1831: 559; in 1841: 398.

For those unfamiliar with the terrible extent of the Famine, a few facts: By the 1840s, an Irish population of about 8.5 million was completely dependent on the potato crop. When it failed because of blight, especially in 1846-47, the results were disastrous.

Hundreds of thousands starved to death, equal or greater numbers emigrated. The population dropped 2 million by 1851. An 1847 letter from William Higgins, bishop of Ardagh (which included Kings County and Shannonbridge), to Dr. Cullen, Rector of the Irish College, in Rome, gives some notion of the tragedy:

> This diocese is composed of portions of seven counties . . . We thus, of necessity, participate most deeply in the wretchedness of the country. Never was any part of the globe visited with so prostrating a destitution. It would sicken your heart to see those of our people who have, up to now, escaped death. People under twenty years of age appear to be bending under old age, and, in many instances, have . . . become idiotic from want of every kind . . . The average deaths in the poorhouses alone are beyond 500 in the week. Whole families are discovered to be dead in their cabins. Fever, dysentery, and starvation are everywhere. God alone can see the end.

Final chat with Fiona the evening before leaving for Galway. She asks me if I have been successful. I tell her I have not. She asks me why, and I give her a truncated explanation.

'I suppose we never did keep records that well. Likely we never cared about that, or had time for it.'

'And you're probably right not to care.'

> On the way to Galway, branch off and go to Coole Park, Lady Gregory's place. House gone, but grounds are still there. Great beech tree, called Autograph Tree, where they all — Yeats, Shaw, AE, Synge, O'Casey — cut their initials so long ago. Was spiritual home of the Irish Renaissance. See Yeats's *The Wild Swans of Coole*. Beautiful afternoon, can imagine days like this in the glory decades of hope as the 19th century ended. Even intelligent and observant people 'believed'. No one — save the Adams brothers and a few others — saw what was coming.

A lot of Gaelic speakers in this part of Galway. Impenetrable language, but the ordinary people who speak it seem to be doing so because they like it. I mean, not because some native movement has pushed them into it. They call it Irish, not Gaelic.

Connemara beautiful, rocky and poor. Brooding, like all of Ireland. Waiting for . . . what? Waiting forever, or will its time come again?

Press on in Galway — Connemara — to see Nees.

Find James, head of clan Nee on island in middle of nowhere just off Galway coast. Rather good-looking man (best-looking Irish are in Galway), sure of himself, most cordial, and tells me a lot — mostly tongue-in-cheek — which I duly note. Wife and friend pay no attention as they chat in kitchen while we talk in parlor. House modest but comfortable.

He is perfectly deadpan as he tells me, echoing Fr. Woulfe, that Nee means hero in Gaelic. Like so many Irishmen, he is subconsciously of the past, but consciously the past means nothing to him. Is something to talk to outsiders about. But within the family, the past is never mentioned, or only mentioned with a laugh. If the Irish had a conscious

sense of the past as real (as distinct from a springboard for sentimental time-passing), they would be different people. (But even their sentimentality is suspect; there are always flashes of a possible substratum of hardness, with the sentimentality only laid on to mislead.) It is a sense they would have to find if they are ever to become 'successful'. But if modern success is as dubious and spiritually expensive as it seems to be, then perhaps they are better off as they are.

There are a lot of possibilities on Ney origins, as The Nee points out. Take your pick: They were called Nee and migrated north from Kerry some 500-plus years ago. They went with the other Nees to western Galway and Connemara; then they came back to central Ireland and Shannonbridge. Then the fact that the name is so rare in Ireland, and there is no 'y' in Gaelic/Irish, so it could not have been spelled Ney in the old days. As noted, Shannonbridge was a military installation in the early 19th century, and the Neys could have been Germans who came over to work there. The disappearance of Neys after 1826 could mean that they left when the job was done.

Then there are the cross currents which swept through Ireland — everything from Vikings onwards, etc. As they say in Ireland, there's no such thing anymore as a pure Irishman — a little English, a little Viking, a little this and that. And no such thing as a pure Englishman if the family has been there a long time. All seasoned with a little Irish. Then there's that notion that the McNees were a sept of the McGregors and came from Scotland long ago. There is practically no scenario which is impossible.

The Nee spins on: 'Now, there is even the remote possibility that this name Ney of yours could have been Sweeney or some other of the many Irish names ending in -ney, with the forepart dropped in some error aboard ship or in the immigration shed. On the other hand, there are a few actual Neys and O'Neys in Ireland, or so I have been told, and the name is almost certainly authentic, in one way if not in another. You know, a lot of them in the old days changed their names because of some little problem or other. Yes, that, too.'

He winks at me and I say, 'I see.'

He goes on. 'You know, Ireland can be an emotional commitment based on historical misrepresentation. Often in the States that way, which I can see when they come back over here . . . Yes, we were enslaved for hundreds of years — horrible, but remember that it takes two to dance that dance . . . If we were all slaves, was it because we were virtuous rather than opportunistic? By being so loyal to our religion, I mean. If we had gone Protestant, would the problem have gone away? Was it just simple-minded not to have been opportunistic? Whatever we think, slavery was more double-edged than we care to admit. I can give you an example: we used to hate the English when we were down, but now that we have our own country back — in this part, anyhow — that's fallen way off. Turns out it was circumstances, not eternal in the bones. Look at your Kennedys going to Harvard and having their suits made in England and marrying into the English nobility just a few generations out of the bog! Like that William Buckley is a mock Englishman, too. And Patrick Moynihan. No, the old days were bad for both sides, and those days lasted a long time, but as it now appears, they were only temporary.'

I recall that the Neys I knew or knew about were singularly free of anti-English feeling. Or of its other side, being pro-Irish. Indeed, once in America, they welcomed living by English standards in a country founded by Englishmen according to a modification of an English model. Certainly true of John J., who was never more himself than when living in New England. Of course, his mother was of English stock, and his father un-Irish. Neys never mentioned the Old Country. John J. and Marie visited once, and found nothing in common. Perhaps Ireland a terrible memory which died with Patrick and Anne. Go west, forget it entirely.

'The population today is not much over 3 million,' says James. 'We have a low birth rate, but the young keep leaving. Despite all the talk to the contrary, this country does not appeal to all of us. It could be that people were not ever meant to live here.'

Later, when he is more comfortable with me, he says, 'You know, I meet so many of these American Irishmen, a lot of them related to me, what I call professional Irishmen. They're all in love with some idea of Ireland, which as we all know is a country none of them would ever want to return to because they could never be comfortable here. They go on to give themselves a past, it seems, and so they make quite a fanciful Irish Catholic history.'

Still later: 'These professional American Irishmen don't want to understand Irish history. They don't want to know that it was the Anglo-Irish — like Parnell, Yeats, Maud Gonne, Lady Gregory — who led the fight for Irish independence and culture. And they go on about the great Irish in America, and they mention Andrew Jackson and Henry Ford, and I say, "Why, man, all those American Irish presidents and such were Ulster Irish, Protestant Irish, what even in America are called Scots-Irish," and they try to argue with me . . . and tell me about St. Patrick's Day parades in New York City, and so on. I give up, I don't enlighten them any more. What do you think it comes from?'

'Some sort of sense of inferiority.'

'We're not that way in Ireland, never have been. We've been at the bottom for centuries, but we never thought that way about ourselves, and never claimed what was not ours.'

It is an interesting talk, because I am reminded yet again of the Ney deviation from 'professional' American Irish behavior. Which is not to say that they may not have thought themselves inferior on other grounds — e.g., on arrival they were obviously not as well-off nor as educated as those at the top of the American totem pole; and they were always too realistic to deny the obvious. But they did not respond to the usual clannish acts of faith — i.e., my father was not impressed favorably by the Kennedys when they rose to prominence, and not at all reticent about explaining precisely why. And I cannot imagine him at a St. Patrick's Day parade.

Just before I leave, James shows me plaque on wall with much detail on origin of Nees. Nothing new, but when he asks if I would like to have a copy I accept — it would be rude to decline. He says he will send a photocopy next day. (It never arrives.)

As I am departing, after farewells, he calls out, 'Needham is yet another spelling!'

A bit later am near Lough Aroolagh, really in the middle of nowhere. See lovely, simple, whitewashed cottage on nearby hill. Small sign on dirt road says: Padraic Pearse's Cottage. Park and walk up to it. Pearse was an Irish educator, cultured man; also commander-in-chief during the 1916 Easter Rebellion. Executed by the British. This cottage was his vacation place. Touchingly simple. Three rooms, just right. Proper aura. Girl in charge says that once these simple cottages were everywhere in Connemara — nothing else — and now they are all gone. Torn down and replaced by ghastly 'villas'. Yeats admired Pearse, and used him as a figure in his poetry. Yeats came to this cottage, the two of them were in these spartan rooms. The only dwelling I've seen in Ireland that I could live in.

Decide to see a bit of this country while here. Shall go to Donegal, not far, and see the famous cliffs at Bunglass.

Pick up quasi-respectable-looking older man hitchhiking. Looks just like Victor McLaglen. And talks like him in John Ford movie. (Ford typical professional Irishman, couldn't admit hard facts of background. Put a sentimental gloss on it, as nearly all did.) He gently feeds me misinformation on a wide range of subjects as we drive past glorious mountains, grinding poverty. He tells me Connemara is so poor, no one can survive. 'Then how *do* you survive?' It turns out that the government subsidizes and there is a lot of aid from the well-to-do European countries because of the Common Market. Ireland is seen as that organization's Third World country, so they have it all ways.

Speaking of money, Ireland is expensive for Americans, like all of Europe, because of the weakness of the dollar and inflation. About 1 1/2 to 2 times as expensive as the US. (The multiple in Switzerland is almost 4.) With a car, etc., this week will be the most expensive part of this trip. When I am rid of the car, it will be less in Ireland. When I am in Europe proper I shall sink to the bottom.

Grotesques in Ireland. Drunks, not so many but memorable and different. The one standing motionless, like a cigar-store Indian, on the road to Clifden. Fiftyish, face the color of tobacco, as though suntanned, but suntan is impossible in Ireland. Liver shot? Absolutely motionless, thought he was a local statue at first. Assumed he was drunk, not so sure later. The old man playing his violin and singing outside the Rock of Cashel, hat waiting for coppers to be tossed in. Also as though suntanned. Spoke to him, and he quick on the uptake and witty. More of an English than an Irish accent, for some reason. Coming into Banagher, along the main street a grotesque from the Middle Ages, round face, fat but hard-looking, drunk, staring out, food on face, which was screwed up or naturally deformed — a local Quasimodo. If I saw 3 or 4, there must be hundreds. Like looking into the past. Shades of medieval folk, jugglers, knaves, varlets, devoid of modernity. The grotesques like figures Twain could have seen in Arkansas a hundred and fifty years ago. Leaning against the palings of sties, covered with gunk from sleeping in the meanest and muddiest of dirt streets the night before.

Possible that not only these atavistic grotesques but so many seemingly contemporary Irishmen are actually out of the past because that's where they live in their minds? The aura of the past about them, palpable. Never quite experienced anything like it, anywhere, either in Europe or America.

Up early and head for Donegal, after spending night in hostel in Clifden, large town in Galway. Route takes me through Sligo.

Stop at Yeats's grave at Drumcliff, north of Sligo, to stretch my legs. He died in the south of France in 1939, but his body was brought back in 1948 as he wanted, to be re-interred within sight of Benbulben, the wonderful squared-off mountain to the east. His great-grandfather was rector at Drumcliff, and Yeats spent much of his youth there. On the tomb is the famous 'Cast a pale eye, horseman, and ride on . . . ' which he had composed for the purpose while alive.

Yeats and Lady Gregory spearheaded the Irish Renaissance and he loved Ireland as only the Anglo-Irish could. See Parnell, et al. He also loved the legendary beauty Maud Gonne. From Holroyd's biography of Shaw: 'In Chancery Lane one black night, he remembered, "into a circle of light under an arc light there suddenly stepped, walking toward me, Yeats with his wing of raven black hair swinging across his forehead and Maud Gonne, dazzlingly beautiful in white silk, both of them in evening dress. The pair was quite beyond description. I was invisible in the dark as they passed on; and of course I did not intrude."' (Maud was quite tall.) Again, that's my Ireland. And Yeats, crazy as he was — spiritualism, etc. — may not be wrong in the long run. Brilliant in his old age. Passionate, lyrical, intelligent, best poetry. If he had said nothing more than that the center cannot hold, he would have said enough. And he said a lot more.

Take walk in the woods near Drumcliff, toward Benbulben.
Stay in hostel in Donegal. Packed, mostly young, lots of Germans.

Am up and off at 6 AM, going to see the cliffs at Bunglass, where the sheer rock walls drop 2000 feet to the Atlantic, the longest such drop in Europe, including Scandinavia. Tough drive on narrow, twisting road. Fortunately so early that no one up. No one ever up and about in Ireland before nine, a habit all the tourists seem to pick up, too. Life so awful the Irish can't face it? Of course, the light is so soft that it doesn't jerk you up in the morning the way American light does.

Park car along difficult road and walk the rest of the way. Tough walk but worth it when the last rolling summit is crested, and the stupendous sight is revealed. The drop is tremendous, the light is perfection, and one stands on the heathered rim in genuine awe. There are very few other people up here this early, and I stay a long time.

Here is the last land between Europe and America. Could have been gentle pastures to the ocean, but, instead, these great, definitive cliffs. Exclamation point. From here, nothing for thousands of miles, and make what you will of that. The Atlantic, far below, rolls in as it has for the eons. Rolls out unimpeded to the New World. Soft, sandy American beaches lose to far less active waters, but the enormous rock cliffs of western Ireland have held back the battering ocean of the North Atlantic since time began. The fantastically rugged coast bids a grim and Delphic farewell to any and all who would leave this last outpost of Europe. Are you sure you're doing the right thing, it asks the emigrant?

Most Americans were Europeans not so long ago, and mostly from the English, Scottish, and Irish islands. One may not like Europe, and may never be able to go back, having become irreversibly American, but one still has to respect what one came from. Yes, we changed when we left and became Americans — but for such a brief period because that America doesn't exist any more. Now that it is gone after its brief brilliance — yes, in its day it was the best of all — may not the survivors who are still awake have to fall back on the further, almost-forgotten line of defense, the one which starts on this terrifying coast and leads back into the heart of old Europe?

Europeans and then Americans created all-out materialism and consumerism. The system's longest holdouts were Ireland's Irish (the American Irish joined in, frantically making up for centuries of material deprivation). Now that materialism/consumerism is wondering if it is bankrupt, may have to go back and re-examine. More than any Europeans, the Irish held out against the system, so, like American Indians, may be bellwethers. Last in, first out. Future world may have to be as reluctant as they have been. Rekindled respect for Clonmacnoise, Armagh, etc.? Rebirth of barefoot saints redeeming the wicked consumers from their erring ways?

The great pendulum of time has made the old Norman-Catholic/native-Irish decision to stay with the faith rather than join Protestant/capitalist materialism seem far less foolish than it did for so long. Henry Adams, of quintessential American Protestant stock, made the definitive case one hundred years ago — in *Mont St. Michel* and *The Education of Henry Adams* — of the post-Reformation world as failure. In the twentieth century, that case has been fortified by a number of gifted Protestant dropouts — see Evelyn Waugh and Graham Greene, etc.

> Church is letting out in Donegal as I come back through, and quite crowded. A lot of the Irish, especially the older ones, look like very decent people. The country from Donegal to Castlepollard, near Mullingar, is rich farm land, quite different from the rockiness of Connemara and Donegal, where the land is so poor that sheep are the only possible crop.

I go to Castlepollard because it is the location of one Frank Ney, the only person in Ireland with that surname who responded to a canvas. (There were only 11 Neys total in all of Ireland.) I have corresponded with Frank — music-hall Irishman, a mass of misinformation, but with a certain lowlife charm. He put me on to his daughter, late 20s, who lives happily in California, hates Ireland & Frank, says he's an alcoholic and wastrel. Mother, Mrs. Frank, went round the bend many years ago and is institutionalized. Why am I doing this? Because I'm excessively conscientious, I suppose.

I wrote him that I would be coming, but he has no telephone so my arrival at 6 in the evening is a surprise. Castlepollard has a population of about 300, and at least a dozen pubs. I pick one and ask if Frank Ney has been in. No, but he'll be here soon. I am in hiking kit, and we soon have a kind of *Playboy of the Western World* scene going in the pub, with the locals goggling openly at this apparition come to see their Frank.

When he arrives, Frank is not quite what I expected. Mid-fifties, Irish combination of utterly honest/utterly false. Thin face, long sideburns, dude clothes. Not remotely connected in any way to any Ney looks in my experience. (The Nees in Galway were possibles. Broad foreheads, etc.) He is a bit taken aback, and goes off into a torrent of Irish nonsense. He circles the subject, but cannot explain why he has this relatively rare surname. Was his father named Ney? Yes. His grandfather? Not sure. I try for specifics for nearly an hour before seeing it is hopeless.

(Sample: He: 'My grandfather was Martin Ney, spelled N-e-y, I'm pretty certain, and he had four brothers and their descendants are spread out all over the world and this unhappy island . . . ' I: 'If so, why are there so few of them findable?' He: 'Some of us were talented musicians. You see, I know some elderly folk here, and they've told me my great-grandfather was over one hundred years old. My grandad's brother was a teacher and also a piper and a fluent Irish speaker.' I: 'And all these people were named N-e-y?' He: 'My grandad also had a first cousin who was in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and then came home and joined our Garda and . . . ' I: 'His name was N-e-y?' He: 'My grandad was N-e-y, I think, but some of his brothers spelled it N-e-a, not N-a-e. In Galway it can be N-e-e, I don't know who abbreviated it, or when. There was a Johnny N-e-a, in Shannonbridge area. I met him there — he was blind and very old . . . ')

I finally give up and prepare to leave by asking him if he wants me to call his daughter when I return to tell her I've seen him and that he's in great shape. 'Oh, that would be wonderful.' He's written me that he's a stonemason by trade, but has been unemployed because there's no work in Ireland. So I'm buying the Guinness. But only for him and me. Nothing for the yokel audience which hangs on every word, then explains it to each other with truly remarkable inaccuracy. It's never-never land and I must be off. Frank, I can tell, has no regrets. He asks for a ride to his place.

I drop him there, a tiny trailer in the country a few miles outside Castlepollard. He asks me in. Barely room for the two of us in a pigsty. The Mother of all Pigsties. The ultimate in where you would not want to live. And outside, all the green fields, the pastoral beauty. Only a man with enormous (if misplaced) confidence would allow anyone else to see this windowless lair. Horrifying, but horror by a designing, artistic hand. (Could even Yeats have foreseen? I doubt it.) Not a square inch is left unsullied. The Museum of Modern Art would adore it in its entirety. Call it *Irish Interior* and 'they' will come. 'Not much,' Frank says. 'Or everything,' I say.

As the final touch, he tells me he has a son in Dublin who is married to a black girl. Two children. With a fine sense of the dramatic, he has waited until we are in the sty to slip me this item. But I am ready for anything and show no surprise, and tell him it's great news. 'Do you think so?' he asks. 'Of course, the Neys need a shot in the arm.' 'Or elsewhere,' he says with as much delicacy as he can muster. 'Or elsewhere,' I agree, 'but from whatever source, great news.'

We part immediately after, and I drive off in excellent spirits. The inverse Michelangelo stands in the doorway of his unspeakable burrow and waves. Whether amateur or

professional, a genealogist must always be ready for anything, and Frank has given me a good curtain. He is at the bottom of the Ney pile, and his son has embraced the new order with a vengeance. I don't really feel that Frank is a relative, however distant, but I have no qualms about claiming him as such because he's so in tune with the future. To say nothing of the present.

Before coming here, I had assumed that if any contemporary Neys could be found in Ireland, it would be interesting to compare them with the American Neys. In such a comparison, perhaps certain questions could be answered. For instance, was the immigration worth it? But as with so much in Ireland, Frank has not provided an answer but complicated such questions.

In fact, Frank and his tales turn this Ney family history into absolute farce in which anything is possible. Example: American Neys have always looked for some tie to the famous Marshal Ney, who was, as noted earlier, born of German parents in Saarlouis, on the French-German border, and spoke German as a child. (As all the Wallaces in Marian's family swung from their tie to Robert Brookings.) Perhaps those Neys were right. Distant stone-mason cousins of the great Marshal (who naturally had the characteristic high Ney forehead), the Neys (Frank is a stonemason) migrate from the German Palatinate to Ireland in the late 1700s to work on military fortifications in Shannonbridge, and put in a new bridge (what is Shannonbridge w/o a bridge?) . . . Looking in vain for *Wurst und Pilsener* in the bleak Irish countryside, wearing *Lederhosen* on Sundays and speaking German in private. When the Shannonbridge job ends, a sigh of relief and off to America, where (this is factual), the founding Ney is a railroad contractor specializing in stone abutments. Can't get away from rock. Etc.

> Marshal Ney interesting figure. Later, of course, spoke nothing but French as he rose to Marshal under Napoleon, who called him '*le plus brave des braves*' after Friedland. Was in charge of the retreat from Russia, and after a harrowing march in which the army was decimated was the last French soldier — on foot, musket in hand — to leave Russian soil. Hemingway telling me — 1951, at Finca Vigia — that he had always wanted to do a book on Ney. 'I lived near Rude's wonderful statue of him in Paris in the 20s, and passed him every morning, and couldn't help thinking about . . . ' We did not discuss Ney's ignominious end. After Napoleon's banishment to Elba, Ney became a marshal in the newly restored Bourbon government, and was so highly thought of that he was sent to arrest Napoleon after the latter left Elba and marched on Paris. But after one embrace, Ney succumbed and joined his Emperor. A few months later, they went down together at Waterloo. Historians say Ney bungled the handling of the Old Guard at the end of the battle. The Bourbons could not forgive his treason, and he was sentenced to death. Appeals were made to the victorious Wellington to intercede on behalf of a gallant fellow soldier. The Iron Duke was not moved by sentiment and the sentence was carried out by a firing squad.

To Tullamore and the final stages of the research. Tullamore is the seat for Offaly (formerly Kings) County — in which Shannonbridge is located — and is the record center. I find a most helpful and knowledgeable woman, Anne Coghlan (head of the department), who plows through everything with me. Even she can find no Neys, they might just as well never have existed. She is the second expert who tells me there is no 'y' in Gaelic, so it cannot have been an Irish name in that spelling. She becomes interested in

the case and drops everything else to work on it. I tell her she's done enough, but she insists on plowing on. She reiterates what The Nee told me:

'Shannonbridge was a military post; they could have come from Germany, where the name is common, to work on some fortifications or on the canal when it was dug. This is an improbable scenario, but not altogether impossible.

'If true, the name could have been Ney from the start because these Neys were emigrants from Germany to Ireland at some point. There is the fact that they do not look Irish, even in these 19th century photographs you have shown me. Actually, they look German — especially your grandfather.

'Of course, the non-Irish appearance might be explained by the possibility that the original Ney line, assuming it was Celtic Irish, could have mingled with any of the non-Celtic lines which have swept through Ireland. The country has been invaded and settled by Vikings, Normans, English, Scots, and others. There was not a great deal of mixing with the local Celts after 1600, except at a high level, but over the centuries there was undoubtedly always some.'

The statue of Ney which Hemingway passed 'every morning' in Paris in the 1920s. (See text, page 26.)

I ask her what the 'Irish look' is. She seems startled. 'I should think it would be obvious in Ireland. The Celtic look is what I mean — classically, blue eyes, pale skin, dark to black hair.' With a laugh, 'Can anyone question the existence of an "Irish look" after a trip to Ireland? Hardly. Or even after visiting certain sections of Boston and New York. And in places like that during the waves of immigration in the 19th century, the Irish stood out. This was somewhat to their disadvantage, because most people change their manner (whether they know they are doing so or not is immaterial) in dealing with those from one cultural-ethnic background rather than another. This is particularly true in Ireland — used to be much more so — where people have several manners. The Anglo-Irish use a different manner with the Celtic Irish than with each other, and vice versa, and there are all sorts of shadings in between. This leads to comedy as well as discomfort, as can be seen in so much of our literature . . . It is interesting, in that regard, that in the old British Army, the men — especially those in the best regiments — were segregated by

cultural background, if not race, as well. The slogan was: "The Irish to attack; the Scots to hold; and the English to retreat" . . . so, as you can see, people were not afraid in those days to . . . '

She goes on and on, and will send me more as it occurs to her. She is well-spoken, intelligent, and witty. Everything one gives up finding in Ireland, but the place always fools you.

> Another example: The wedding reception going on several days before at Birr's best hotel. The crowd most respectable. With four tall, remarkably handsome men in their fifties at the bar. All in well-cut black suits. Just when one is convinced that such people don't exist in Ireland they appear. The place has its ways.

Later, I go through the local newspaper records, and find nothing on a return to the area by any Patrick Ney in the late 1800s.

Pick out a B & B down the road toward Mullingar. Lovely farm, good atmosphere, so pulled together I presume it's Protestant, but woman tells me they're Catholic. Am asleep by nine, the long summer evening nowhere near dark. Good stupendous breakfast in the morning — when they do get up the Irish need plenty of stoking. I walk around part of the farm and talk to owner. It's a beautiful farm, about 200 acres, and similar places roll to the mountains in all directions. Leave around nine and head for Cork to leave car.

More on the Anglo-Irish: Still seem to own so much of Ireland, including all the large estates. Most just capitalist drones, needless to say, but then there were the exceptional few, but numerically those few still a far greater percentage than that class produced anywhere else in the world. Contrast between their genius and their beautiful but feckless (and often silly) way of life. Instead of working hard to build an empire, like their English cousins, the best of them sat around and thought about life and other important matters. The aristocratic telescope builder in Birr, the George Bernard Shaw types, the writers — even the Duke of Wellington, born Arthur Wesley (later changed to Wellesley), 5th son of Garrett Wesley, 1st earl of Mornington, in Dublin in 1769, whom Shaw said would have been different had he been born in England, and would never have beaten Napoleon had he not been born in Ireland, etc. Ireland a better setting then England for brain development, according to GBS.

Drive through good farming country, rolling hills, Georgian houses. Actually, beautiful farmland, and houses prosperous. Horses everywhere. Read somewhere that American Thoroughbreds have to be crossed with Irish counterparts every so often because Irish stock stronger over the long term, while the American strains weaken. Attributed to the lime in the soil, the weather, etc. True of people, too? American climate and soil producing attenuated stock which needs occasional European infusion?

Stop at Rock of Cashel, one of Ireland's most important ruins from the great days. The remains are extensive and sit atop a small hill — most impressive. Started as the seat of

the high kings of Munster around 300. St. Patrick baptized King Aengus here in 450. Cathedral built in the 1100s. Burned by Gerald Mor, the Great King of Kildare, around 1500. Then really burned by the English in 1647. The people from Cashel had fled to the cathedral for safety, so peat was piled against the cathedral walls and all 3000 were roasted. But much remains, and the place has a feel. Much tasteful restoration. Excellent place to muse.

Next morning, after turning car in, leave Cork for Belfast. Cannot go to Ireland w/o visiting the scene of The Troubles. Have Eurail pass and am going to go straight up and spend a couple of days and straight back, and then onto ferry for France. Traveling with minimal luggage. (The rest is in locker in Cork.)

> I don't realize that there is a 1st-class car on train (to which Eurail pass entitles me), so drift into one of the 2nd-class coaches, which gradually fills up and I am stuck between two pathetic, seedy, lower-middle-class, elderly Irishmen. Worst, they are the poor who attempt to keep up appearances. Their poor old shiny suits have frayed cuffs and I'm sure they trim off the loose threads, something one imagined went out in the 19th century until one goes to Ireland. Well, Ireland is 19th century, so what else do you expect? The very definite odor of the European poor rises from them. They try to talk to me so pathetically but so politely that I am ashamed of a lack of charity toward such poor wrecks. Not their fault, and I do talk to them. They know no more of the outside world than Tibetans, despite the telly, etc. I explain to myself that they cannot believe in TV images, which is not all bad. They cannot believe in me, either, or in anyone or anything outside the poverty and the attempted gentility which has been their life. So it is not at all stressful letting them murmur along and throwing in a word from time to time.

The outskirts of Dublin are predictably awful. Endless Council housing. Pathetic, sad. The Irish do not put much stress on where they live, any more than most Europeans do. There are few 'homes' in Ireland, just as there are few in Europe. No word for home in most European languages, even German. Only in England and America does life revolve around the home, with everything put in on it. A place where all the important living was done, and so it needed to be as attractive as possible, a concept begun in England and perfected in America. In Ireland one uses a house to sleep and (part of the time) to eat in, but life is in the streets and the pubs, as it is in the cafes in Italy and France. Of course, there are exceptions, but the generality holds. In Ireland the poor live in sties and the rich in showoff and highly uncomfortable big Georgian houses. Comfort for its own sake is pretty well unknown. Remember where Frank Ney lived.

Station change in Dublin, never welcome news, and then the train for Belfast. This time I do find the 1st-class car, and have a lot more room.

No one else in this car except a rather *soignée* Belfast matron and her daughter. The girl, about 18, handsome in a confectionary, Junior League-ish way, is as peevish and restless as any American bourgeois girl and buries herself in fashion magazines. The mother, however, most polite. We talk, inevitably — or at least the mother and I talk. I do not mention The Troubles, but she brings them up — as everyone I meet in Belfast will do. (I make a point of never starting down that road.) They live in some padded suburb,

and she says they are quite unconscious of strife. Her husband is in shipping and often goes to America. 'He says it seems more dangerous in New York,' she says hesitantly. 'He's undoubtedly right.' The daughter twitches behind her magazine; she detests living in such a . . . 'primitive'. . . place, I am sure. Spoiled, Americanized, quite inferior to, for example, Fiona, who ran the B & B near Shannonbridge. The mother another matter and I wonder if the Northerners are starting to come apart.

The mother and I talk about whether you can tell the difference between southern and northern Ireland from the train. I say I've been told the farms are neater in the North. She concurs.

I give her my pitch on Southern Ireland as aristocratic-and-peasant compared with North as peasant-vs.-lower middle class, Catholic casualness vs. Protestant work ethic. She concurs warmly, and cites examples.

I tell her true story about old friend Desmond O'Donovan, Irish film producer I knew in London, telling me years ago — 1965 at least — that the Irish (he was a native), were the Negroes (his word) of Europe. The condition proved by the way the Germans and Japanese had moved into Ireland because of the coolie labor. She concurs, but weakly, doesn't want to go quite that far. Upset, I assume, at O'Donovan laughing at his countrymen.

I try to remember if I have known any real Irishmen besides Desmond. There was his brother, Kevin McClory, Johnny Huston's boom man, and then one of the movers in the Bond movies. (Have forgotten why they had different surnames despite being full brothers.) Kevin, a 'goodlooking Irishman', married Bobo Sigrist, always referred to as an heiress. Saw him last many years ago in The Star, the pub run by Paddy Kennedy in London. In Halkin Mews in Belgravia. Paddy former IRA man. The Star became a spot for the jet and movie set, especially on Sunday mornings. I liked Desmond, found Kevin a bore. Anyhow, last time I saw Kevin he was performing his parlor trick. Sunday noon at The Star, everyone drinking Black Velvet, and Kevin set a full glass on his head and slowly went down to a reclining position on the floor without it falling. Applause. In the crowd, the Maharajah of Cooch-Behar, and Elia Kazan, the American director, and lots of others like them, plus a ton of starlets. Then Kevin slowly got up, glass still in position. Applause. Then Elia Kazan wanted to try it. Put glass on head, started down and it promptly fell off. Laughter. Cruel London laughter at compulsive Greek-American copycat-showoff with Black Velvet in his hair and dribbling down the rest of him as he picked up glass shards.

Then there was Paddy Kennedy, the former IRA man, who ran The Star and to whom everyone was a ponce. Good friend, tough, dependable. Asked me one day if I wanted to go to the Derby. And off we went to Epsom, he and I and Liam O'Flaherty, who wrote *The Informer* and much else, and an English colonel who was the only one in proper garb, morning coat and grey topper. We were all in some sort of limo that Paddy had laid on, with plenty of drink and good talk. And the horses in the Derby on grass, great clods coming up every time a hoof went down. Paddy and the colonel heavy bettors. Liam O'Flaherty amusing and instructive about Ireland, naturally. Paddy drank all day with his customers and never showed it, but it was a hard life and I'm sure he's long dead. He never went out of his way with a customer no matter how famous. And the jet set came and played by his rules. Even Huston went to Paddy to say hello, to ask him to join the allnight poker game, etc. One of the few Irish Irishmen I have ever known — better to say, I suppose, that

he was one of the few I could have known, or who could have known me. Everyone said he had done his share of killing in the old days in Ireland, and you felt he was capable of it. Bright hard little blue eyes, black hair, stocky, generous smile, steel underneath.

Moral: if you want to know Ireland, know Irishmen — like Desmond & Paddy — in London. And Frank O'Connor in America — so shrewd, knew so much about human nature, expected so little, understood so much, lived such a sane and profoundly successful life. But quite atypical.

Wonderful sight leaving Drogheda. Sign on platform *pissoir* saying GENTS, and then underneath the Gaelic translation: FIR. Doesn't quite seem adequate. (All public signs are required by law to be bilingual.)

Belfast: Evidence of work ethic everywhere. Also, a kind of surliness. Clipped, extremely unattractive accent. Article in newspaper says the Northern Irish don't know what their identity is. Remember they think of themselves as being part of Great Britain. They will refer to the Republic of Ireland as Ireland, but Northern Ireland is the United Kingdom. They will not use the word Irish if they can help it. Unlike the Anglo-Irish, who think of themselves as Irish, they think of themselves as British. If they admit ethnicity, they are Scots in origin. Humorless.

Central Belfast clean, rather attractive. Afternoon when I arrive. Walk around. British troops in evidence, in weapons carriers, machine guns and automatic rifles at the ready and covering crowds. Young — what if finger slips on safety ? A lot of security people, too. Hardeyed, heavily armed. There is a system of gates on all downtown streets. In case of trouble they come down or slide across, preventing escape after bombings or other depredations. Each gate requires guards on 24-hour basis. Very expensive.

Go to tourist office. Compared with the crowded tourist offices in any city in the Republic or in the rest of Europe, this is empty. Very well laid out and staffed, but no one there. The Troubles have ruined tourism in the North. A half dozen well-dressed clerks leap to their feet, competing for my meager business. The young man who finally waits on me is pleasant, knowledgeable.

Go to hostel, about a mile and half from center. New, clean, OK. Northern Ireland uses British money, will not take Irish money. Hostels better than hotels for the kind of investigation I'm carrying on. In a hotel, one is sequestered in a room. In a hostel, one circulates in the public rooms, where everyone talks to everyone else. Almost always possible in a hostel to find a private room if you can't stand company. Usually, I don't mind. I'm here to learn.

Walk back downtown, and, as suggested by Dutch couple I ran into, arrange with taxi to show me the sore spots. 'Don't take a black taxi,' a Dutch couple had warned, 'they are controlled by the IRA and won't show you everything.' All taxis seem to be black, but finally I find one that is not, and off we go. It is about 7 in the evening, but still plenty of light (won't be dark until 10 or so).

We start with the notorious Falls Road, a Catholic section. Looks perfectly normal, women pushing prams, no wreckage. But then driver shows me bombed-out houses. We pass a building covered with graffiti, most of it mildly obscene anti-Brit stuff. Huge boulders surround the place, and the windows are covered with metal. 'An IRA headquarters,' the driver says. 'I didn't know they were allowed so openly.' 'They're not. But they come and go, so it's hard to nail them.' I never know whether driver is Prot or Catholic; he is not enthusiastic about either side.

We pass a Prot (official) police station which is really a sight. Interlocked steel pilings rise 20 feet, with tiny slits for guns. Plenty of boulders. 'They have to protect the stations that way so the IRA can't send a car full of explosives in.'

Then a Prot working-class section; looks just like the Catholic section. And the people look alike. Then a wall rising a good 15 feet and snaking around as far as the eye can see, dividing Catholic and Prot neighborhoods, a junior Berlin wall. I expected the Catholic sections to be much messier than the Prot, but not the case in what I saw. Of course, I didn't see all.

I ask driver if any Catholics live in Prot neighborhoods and vice versa. 'No.' 'None.' 'Literally none?' 'Yes.' 'How is that enforced?' 'If you move into where you're not supposed to be, you're dead in a week.'

Flags everywhere, that of the Republic in all Catholic sections, the Union Jack in all Prot sections.

When I ask driver how long it will go on, he says: 'Forever, there's too much money in it.' 'Really? How does that work?' 'The IRA makes it in all sorts of kickbacks, and in dealing drugs. You see them driving around in big cars. And the Protestant paramilitary groups do about as well.'

Refer back to 'Irish History in Nutshell': In Northern Ireland, however, the English planted Scots in the 1600s. They were peasants themselves, and so could not get along with the native peasants, and the rancor persists to this day. The Scots peasants, far more industrious than the native Irish, became small businessmen and ship builders. The Irish peasants, who could appreciate if not applaud aristocrats, despised the bourgeois Scots, who reciprocated.

This ongoing cross-cultural antipathy was/is, I think, the genesis of the modern troubles. Is called religious strife, but religion as such has little to do with it. It really goes back to Desmond O'Donovan's joke about the Irish being the blacks of Europe. That is the way the Northern Prots see them — not as slaves to be exploited, as the Germans and Japanese do in Desmond's scenario, but as shiftless, parasitical, etc. As many white Americans see blacks when they move into the neighborhood. In America there's still room to move away; in Northern Ireland there isn't.

If the religions were switched, and the Irish Irish were Prots, and the Scots immigrants were, even after 350 years, Catholics, the feeling on the part of the Scots would be the same; they would look down on the feckless Prots. In the same spirit, if the Irish Irish were suddenly supplanted with hardworking Swiss or German Catholics, the Prot Scots would have no problem accepting them, intermarrying, etc.

(Another irony: Scotland was originally settled, in important part around 500 BC by Irish Celts who actually gave Scotland its name, and the Celtic language and bloodline. So the two peoples are closely related, and the Scots planted in northern Ireland in the 1600s were, in a sense, going home. This ancient relationship and partial consanguinity is currently embarrassing, naturally, to both sides, but in any true settlement it would have to be faced.)

Of course, the Irish Catholics in Northern Ireland are not really as far down as blacks, and many have a lively sense of their own shortcomings. And they are changing all the time; and there are countless exceptions, etc. And who is to say materialism is everything? However, their own excuse for being one-down is often their 700 years of servitude to the British. But if they had been a superior people enslaved by an inferior, they would not have looked and acted as they did for those 700 years — i.e., like slaves. They accepted the condition, in some ways, as the Russian serfs did. On the other hand, they have changed a great deal since gaining independence, and they may come to the point where they can smile at themselves — or at what they were — as others smile at them. First off, they would have to understand, in the North, why the Prots dislike them. Yes, the Prots are unattractive and limited and stupid, but they (the Prots) do have a point, and the Irish Catholics won't be free until they see and acknowledge it. Human nature being what it is, they may well not be able to do that until the point no longer exists.

If the Prots are, as they claim, 'better' people than their feckless cousins, that superiority is vitiated if not wholly negated by their having committed to a questionable theory of life — i.e., the Protestant/materialistic notion, which is steadily losing ground worldwide. At the other end of the seesaw, the Catholic Irish, while possessing, perhaps, a better theory, are careless, destructive, and even silly in their application of it.

In time, the two sides may come together as succeeding generations intermarry and the old divisions disappear. It seems doubtful that the feverish pitch of an extremely artificial hatred can be kept at this pitch forever.

The next morning, a Saturday, much early-morning action outside the hostel. The Prots are marching, middle-aged men in business suits draped with all manner of sashes and armbands. Preceded by bands playing obscure marches and martial-sounding music. A lot of drums. A few bystanders shouting, 'Fuck the Pope!', and other appropriate slogans. The marchers seem to be concentrating on this area and reappear every few minutes. I ask hostel manager how often this goes on. 'Every week,' he says wearily. 'And bigger on special occasions.' Leave that morning for Dublin — to stay one day — and then to Cork and the ferry for Le Havre.

Final thoughts on Belfast and Northern Ireland: Article in *Sunday Times* about how this segment of The Troubles started in 1969 when British troops were sent in to protect the Catholic minority, which had started to demand better treatment. I didn't know that, always thought the British came in to protect the Prots. That was a later development, after the IRA started in on them in retaliation. There was a book mentioned in that article called *In Our Time*, as I recall the title, which purportedly explains why the Prots suddenly decided to go after the Catholics. Have been told that before 1969 things were relatively peaceful. And 50 or more years ago the Catholic and Prot working classes did live in the same neighborhoods, etc. Evidently something spooked the Prots in 1969.

The surliness of the Northern Irish Prots, always on the edge of rudeness. Not a happy or self-confident people. In SapSpeak, definitely suffering from an identity crisis — but remember that even SapSpeak can, on occasion, may be referring, however awkwardly, to a reality. They themselves say they will eventually be outbred by the Catholics. Which would not be desirable. As it is, they are destroying themselves by making the Catholics more important then themselves. (The Catholics don't make the Prots more important than themselves. Nothing could supplant Guinness.) They are British, as they claim, in that. What they are doing is analogous to what the English did in 1914 when hating and killing Germans became more important than loving and saving England. The real England, the old, wonderful, indispensable England, not the trumped-up Empire, which they fought for and lost anyhow. Ended up killing themselves to kill the Kaiser.

The Catholics need the Prots to remind them of their fecklessness. The Prots need the Catholics to remind them that bourgeois living is not the only point to life. Only if they both survive would Ireland have a chance of really becoming a country. Fuck the Pope *and* the Queen! What have either of them done for you lately? Grow up, both of you.

Ideally (impossible, most probably), Prots need to come to terms with the Catholic/Christendom past of Ireland, with Clonmacnoise, etc. With Shaw and the rest of the Anglo-Irish reality, too. Understand their bourgeois bent, too. Catholics need to see themselves as the Prots see them, just as American Southerners had to see themselves as Northerners saw them before they could even start to come free.

(For example, it is true that the English at the top were cruel in Ireland, but they were just as cruel in England itself to their own people over the centuries — see Shaw on English barbarism, especially in *Saint Joan*. Nevertheless, the world would be far poorer if England had never existed — for a long time there were marvelous doings there, in many fields — so the world, including the Irish, must not allow the old cruelties to blot out that reality. Alas, this has nothing to do with modern England, which is quite devolved, more's the pity.)

Dublin crowded beyond belief. Have trouble finding lodging, finally secure a bunk in a dump. Then stroll through Dublin at leisure. Everyone wants to come to Dublin, especially the young from everywhere. In addition to Americans and Europeans, there are Japanese, Nepalese, Indian Indians, Javanese, South Americans, Pacific Islanders, etc., etc.

Ragbag clothes, hair dyed every color of the rainbow (with green a special favorite) and coiffed in elaborately artistic ways, with spikes the favorite. Rings and precious (?) stones in their ears and noses and wherever they can find pierceable flesh.

City founded not by indigenous Irish, but by Vikings. What would they make of it now?

The streets are so packed that one makes headway with difficulty. The quadrangle of Trinity College as packed as anywhere else. From there, a struggle against the tide up Grafton Street, then left along the north side of St. Stephen's Green, and then find temporary shelter in the elegant old Shelbourne Hotel. The Dublin Horse Show is in full swing, and that set, in relatively formal dress, is trying to make it from their Rollses through the throng of young into the Shelbourne. Only 25 feet, but they have to fight for every inch. In the bar, I talk with a German aristocrat and his attractive wife, and some English. Much organdy, many picture hats, a lot of chitchat. Later, am asked to join them at a party in a rented house nearby. We walk, struggling through jeering young. Party is tedious after an hour or so, and I leave. Walk back through the city to my dump, about 2 miles. It is 9 PM, but still light and still plenty of milling young.

Next day, go down to Dalkey early, about 10 miles by bus, to see where Shaw ran loose as a boy and was happy for the first (and last?) time in his life — i.e., he never forgot Dalkey Hill and Torca Cottage; wasn't (and isn't) that remarkable scenically, but it was all he had.

Back to Dublin's Heuston Station for the train to Cork. Leaving Dublin without regret. The Georgian buildings are still standing, and the place is obviously bigger and more prosperous than when last seen years ago. But the mickey, to use the Irish expression, has been taken out of Dublin.

Train ride to Cork uneventful. Find 1st-class car (the one I missed coming up from Cork). No one else in it except two Australian women and a group of young Irish women returning from a vacation in Morocco. The young Irish women don't quite know why their tour entitles them to upscale, but take it with appreciation, because train is packed and people are standing in 2nd class. They are nurses, etc., really very nice girls, modest, polite, easy to talk to, amusing and ready to be amused. I am sure they have a hard life, but there are no complaints. Any of them married? Slow smiles. To Irish men? You can't be serious. No way. Yet some of them will eventually marry Irish men, I'm sure. But those who do won't complain then, either. Even though young, they are wiser, deeper than the two mature Australian women, who are only intent, like all bourgeois, on material reality. Irish girls always know that what you can't see has more power than what you can. Except when they leave Ireland and go to America and become like everyone else. Yes, it can be argued that if what they have is that fragile it wasn't much to begin with.

In Cork, pick up luggage from RR Station locker and share taxi to Le Havre ferry. Which turns out to be huge, carrying cars and passengers. Run by Irish company. Packed.

Mixed bag of all nationalities. It will be long trip, about 24 hours, to Le Havre, all the way around England and across the widest part of the Channel. About 400 miles.

Go up on top deck to watch Ireland recede. Not sorry to be leaving. We are at sea and it is breezy, but the sun came out the moment we pulled away from the Irish coast. And it is definitely warmer. Suddenly realize just how chilly Ireland was.

Talk to fortyish German who has Irish summer place in Connemara on Atlantic. Speaks excellent English. Why there? Because cheaper than anywhere else in Europe. Only place he could afford a seaside house. Married, three children. They spend whole summer, he comes and goes to Heidelberg where he is in business. Usually flies, but is taking a load of stuff in VW van, so is using ferry. Does he like Connemara? Oh, yes, except that there are too many other Germans. 'It's the only language I hear all summer.'

He is up on Irish conditions, and goes over the same ground as the Connemara farmer/hitchhiker. Explains in detail how some European financial organization(s) in the Common Market support their poorest member. A great deal of money comes into Ireland this way. All the poor farmers subsidized, etc. Money for roads, etc.

Evidently, Desmond O'Donovan was accurate on a level he could not have foreseen in 1965. Once exploited — indeed, a definitive example of exploitation — Ireland is now the exploiter, the officially Third World community of western Europe, with all the subsidies that enviable position mandates.

I have not learned a great deal about the Neys directly, not as much as I had hoped, but it has been most fruitful indirectly. One way or another, they were here, and everything I saw in Ireland contributes to a picture of them because they saw something of the same. And were here long enough to be molded by it, as Shaw claimed Ireland stamped everyone born and brought up there as Irish. No matter the bloodline, if the origins are in Ireland, that is where the story must begin, because the mysterious, enveloping Irish atmosphere has been a determining influence on any race or culture which has existed there.

Later, rereading *John Bull's Other Island*, I am struck at how accurate Shaw is on that point. For the reader seeking an understanding of Ireland, I recommend that play and its preface as the best analysis ever written.

Of course, once any Irish man or women of whatever bloodline leaves Ireland, that Irish influence weakens, and is superseded by new influences, which strengthen generation by generation. But Ireland is still the only starting point, and an empathetic understanding of Ireland is indispensable.

THE MIDDLE WEST

In the summer of 1993, I went to the Middle West to research the Ney family there. The starting place was Independence, Iowa, near where Patrick Ney chose to settle permanently about 1870, buying some 600 acres of land. Born in Ireland in 1821, he came to America about 1840. (Exact date unknown.) He married in New York City in 1849. Before coming to Iowa, he had been in the United States for nearly 30 years, during which time he had moved slowly west from New York, farming and acting as an independent contractor of railroad sections. He lived in Sandusky, Ohio, and Arcola, Indiana (near Fort Wayne), and served in the Union Army in the Civil War.

The land he bought at Monti, near Independence, is beautiful even today. The old plat maps show his wife, Anne, as the owner of all of it. We know that he contracted and built sections of railroad bed as far west as California. The supposition is that he left his wife and family on the Monti farm while he was away making money. (He had to have done fairly well to have been able to buy land and put three sons through law school; the Neys were better off than most pioneers.)

Independence is about 70 miles north of Iowa City, and the same distance west of Dubuque and the Mississippi River. It is a typical small Iowa town, surrounded by farm land, with shimmering, endless corn fields in the summer. St. John's Cemetery is on the edge of the town and the corn grows almost to the wrought-iron fence. It is an appealing

place to be buried, with the corn in the near distance, and the old cypress trees in the cemetery itself. There are many, many worse places. The contrast between the cool shade under the big trees and the corn waving under the sun is compelling. The plot is generous, and identified by NEY in large letters cut into an obelisk. Several generations of Neys are buried here, beginning with Patrick K. Ney. Their dates are given on the obelisk; their actual sites are marked with initialed headstones. The full list and years of death: Patrick, 1892; his daughter Mary A., died at birth or in infancy, 1861; his daughter Sarah, who died in 1939; his son, Judge John J. Ney, died 1921. Then Judge's Ney's wife, Frances, died 1893; his daughter Marian, died at birth, 1881; his son, John J. Ney, died 1974; and John J.'s wife, Marie, died 1991. There are eight empty spaces available.

Patrick's wife, Anne, is not buried here, but in Monti, some fifteen miles east of Independence, where the original farm was located. Monti is not a town — just a church and a cemetery in the middle of farms and woods. It is not even on the map. I drive there on a splendid day through splendid cornfields.

I have called the priest at Monti for an appointment so that he can help me find the grave sites there. Also have an old plat showing three Ney holdings — one large farm and two small sections.

On arrival, am struck with attractiveness — even charm — of the place. The old church, quite well done, sits on a slight rise, with the graveyard behind it. The fields and farms stretch to the horizon, wonderfully green under the soft breeze. It is all in the middle of nowhere, but seemingly at the center of something.

Patrick Ney, the founding or Ur-Ney. Born Ireland, 1821; died Iowa, 1892. Note broad, high Ney forehead, and oddly unkempt beard, about a foot too long. Even so, calm, determined, dignified.

Like Ireland, the Middle West shapes. Or did in the past. No 19th-century pioneer family could have been there for any length of time without being changed.

The area's slumbering potency is reflected in the power of its great writers — since the end of the 19th century pre-eminent in America, following the high point of easterners like Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville and James. Twain, Eliot, and Fitzgerald were actually all born on the Mississippi, at Hannibal, St. Louis, and St. Paul respectively. Lincoln was born in Kentucky, but lived most of his life in Illinois; Hemingway was born near Chicago. They were all from the Mississippi River Basin.

And as with Ireland, to understand the Neys, it is necessary to understand the Middle West, especially in its early days.

The priest comes out of the residence to greet me.

He tells me that lots of Irish immigrants came here in the nineteenth century (Patrick probably heard about it on his travels), and built their church and maintained their faith. There are some descendants of those pioneers in the area, but many have moved away. I produce my plat and show him Anne Ney's holdings. He figures out that the 600 acres would have been immediately east of the church/cemetery. We walk the hundred yards out around the church to the cemetery.

In the cemetery, the NEY monument is clearly visible.

Here are buried Anne Ney, wife of Patrick; her son, Edward; Edward's first wife, Ellen, who died; and his second wife, Mary.

Patrick Ney is not buried with his wife, Anne, but fifteen miles away in Independence. Putting that together with the fact that the land was always in her name makes one wonder if they were incompatible. Had they separated?

Beyond the cemetery the former Ney land rolls down to Buffalo Creek, winding through stands of trees on the property. How lovely it must have been 125 years ago. Perhaps even a stray buffalo or so still around, coming to the creek for water.

We go to the church, which turns out to be quite chaste inside, almost New England Congregational. Plain walls and pews, simple altar, dearth of saints. A few stained-glass windows, but uncluttered. From the center aisle, I can clearly see from lettering at the bottom of two of the windows that they were given by Neys, who turn out to be Edward and his brother Patrick.

Driving back to Independence, I think of the poor immigrants, trying to do so much in one generation. Born into poverty and social & political constriction in Ireland, and then coming to this Eden. Of course, they joined, as good new Americans, in destroying the prairie with the plow and killing off the buffalo, but in Monti the damage seems tempered.

One naturally wonders what it meant to them to be under such a placid sky after the turbulence of the racing Irish clouds, and on such different land, with the Indians still around. The atmosphere of the pioneer experience for them was so much stronger on the Middle Western frontier than it would have been elsewhere.

Thinking of the Ney farm, the wife alone for so many years, although heartened, perhaps, by the size of the holding, and the fact that the absent husband kept sending

plenty of money. Perhaps they had worked it out rather intelligently. The land would be in her name because he was away so much; if anything happened to him in what was still wild country, it was preferable that she and her children would not have to depend on probate and lawyers. It was already theirs.

> If the Middle West has charm, it also has — as writers from Sinclair Lewis to Garrison Keillor have made plain — tedium. And a colossal sense of waste. Here were millions of square miles, spread over a dozen states, of the richest farming land this world has ever produced. In Europe, dukedoms and castles and civilizations had derived from meager soil, much of it nonarable, parceled out in tiny plots, even to the nobles. The pattern had echoes in New England, with lovely old towns financed from hardscrabble soil. But here, with at least 160 acres possible to every man, and more to the enterprising . . . the result has been tragic. Dismal, philistine towns; worn-out men and women living in pathetically unattractive houses on huge farms, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of expensive machinery and outbuildings; deliberately oafish speech and behavior. Why?
>
> An intelligent and perceptive European would say — as de Toqueville and Crevecoeur did say — that it was an inevitable result of the American system. Without either a unifying church or aristocracy to demonstrate true priorities, ordinary men and women lost their way. The Protestant/free enterprise notion that a country could be turned over to people with no defense against esthetic and cultural breakdown other than individual readings of the Bible and their own taste was proved preposterous. There was charm on the fringes and pathos in the eagerness, but at bottom the anti-esthetic root dominated. (This unpleasant fact had one positive result: It dominated and drove the sensitive to introspective speculation and thus produced some remarkable literature.)
>
> In Ireland, the poor Neys (we assume that was almost certainly their economic state) were in a country not yet spoiled by production and development, and their church proclaimed the superiority of the Kingdom of God to materialism. But once in the United States, they were converted to the new faith just like all other immigrants. However, as shall be seen, there were some exceptions.

It has not been possible to discover exactly when Patrick Ney left Ireland nor when or where he arrived in the United States. Nor if any brothers accompanied him. The first firm date is that of his marriage, on December 6, 1849, in the old St. Patrick's Cathedral, in New York City, to Anne Corcoran, who was born in Nanagh, County Tipperary, Ireland, on October 21, 1831.

Because he was married in New York City, it is likely that was his port of entry, but no record of such entry can be found.

From New York, Patrick worked his way west, as noted. Three years after his marriage, his eldest son, John, was born in Sandusky, Ohio. The following is from a piece on the latter in the *History of Buchanan County*:

> [In Ohio Patrick Ney began railroad contracting.] He graded several miles of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad, and later purchased a farm at Arcola, a station on the road eight miles west of Fort Wayne, Indiana. . . . He came to [Iowa] from Indiana with a complete railroading outfit and graded the heavy work on what is now the Illinois Central west of Winthrop. When the company became

financially embarrassed and unable to pay off the men, Mr. Ney, although not personally responsible . . . paid off his men and moved the railroading outfit to Austin, Minnesota. . . . Later he enlisted [in the Union Army] in the Fifth Indiana Battery of Light Artillery. [After the war he was] engaged as a contractor on the Fort Wayne, Jackson & Saginaw, the Fort Wayne & Grand Rapids, and the Fort Wayne, Muncie & Cincinnati Railroads. He also built the Baker Street and Clinton Street sewers in Fort Wayne, and completed contracts on the Grand Truck Railroad in Michigan and the Paducah & Elizabethtown Railroad in Kentucky. He constructed the abutments of bridges at Fairbank and Quasqueton in Buchanan County [Iowa] in 1871, and was a pioneer in the use of the prairie boulder for bridge work. He completed an important contract for the state of California on the Sacramento River, known as the debris work. . . . [He later] made a visit to the scenes of his childhood in Ireland. . . . He died in Dubuque. Mrs. Ney was a sterling wife and mother and a most valuable helpmate. Both were enterprising, industrious, energetic people, and they reared a large family, [all members of which] are now a credit to their name.

Additional information: According to the July 14, 1885, *Fort Wayne Sentinel*, as reprinted in the Independence, Iowa, *Conservative*, July 22, 1885: 'Edward Ney died this morning at his home on Williams Street, at the age of 60. Mr. Ney has lived in this city for some 33 years, and at one time was a successful contractor . . . two sons who are railroad engineers.' Then comment from the Independence *Conservative*: '[He] came to Iowa with his brother, Patrick, in 1858, and spent a year working on the grade of the Illinois Central.' If Edward had been in the Fort Wayne area for 33 years in 1885, then he had come there in 1852, about the time his brother Patrick did.

According to the Mormon records, gleaned from the IAS Index for 1850, page 209, there was a Peter Ney living in Abingdon Township, Wayne County, Indiana, in 1850. Family hearsay suggests that Patrick Ney had two brothers — Peter and Michael — so that Peter Ney is a possible first name. He may also have had Edward as a middle name, etc., which could account for the apparent contradiction of Edward/Peter.

Also, a Patrick Ney paid taxes in Huron County, Ohio, in 1850-51. Patrick Ney evidently moved between Sandusky, Ohio, and Ft. Wayne, Indiana, in those years. Church records in Arcola show that he donated the land for it.

As noted, attempts to find any trace of other brothers — on entry or in Connecticut and North Carolina as well as in the Middle West — have not been successful.

According to his application for a Civil War pension, Patrick Ney joined the 5th Independent Battery, Indiana Field Artillery, on October 9th, 1861, and was discharged on January 19, 1863, because of a disability suffered on active duty. Family hearsay claims he was wounded at the Battle of Shiloh, which took place in 1862, but there is no documentation of this. It is known that he suffered from a bone necrosis from his discharge until his death, and that this condition, which was the reason for the discharge, was the basis for his pension application.

Patrick Ney certainly seems to have been a successful pioneer. Like all 'good' American immigrants, he tried from the start to succeed, an aim his descendants would continue to pursue. Within a few years after arrival as — we presume — a penniless immigrant, he was a railroad contractor with his own crews. He made enough money to support a large family, buy a fairly good-sized land tract, put three of his sons through law school, and pay for a visit to Ireland.

Aside from these indications of relative financial success, the only hint of anything unusual for the period was his personal and financial relationship with his wife, Anne. They evidently lived apart for the last 20 years of his life, and she outlived him by 22 years, dying March 3, 1914. They certainly died apart and are buried apart. But, as noted, that separation may have been agreed upon and not the result of domestic strife. He roamed because of his business, but he also put his land in her name in her lifetime, an almost unheardof step at that time.

In terms of immigrant success, it should be kept in mind that from the 1600s on, all European immigrants to the New World were poor, with the exception of a small number with some financial resources who came to Virginia, Georgia, and a few other southern colonies and (later) states. In addition, many early immigrants were bondservants and felons. Today, we tend to assume that the immigrants were the most adventurous, the 'best' genetic stock, but years ago it was widely assumed they were the worst. Among other arguments was the contention that instead of staying at home and fighting for necessary change, they fled ignominiously; and this cowardice, this moving-on when things become too demanding, has colored and stained American life. Rebuttal would point out that their emigration was most often because of poverty, especially in Ireland and Scandinavia; those immigrants were too hungry and poor to be able to afford the luxury of staying to try to effect changes.

In any case, by 1840 those whose forebears had arrived fifty or more years before tended to look down on those arriving from Ireland, and, to a lesser but still definite degree, on those arriving from elsewhere in Europe, including Germany. The population of the United States in 1790 was roughly 4 million; in 1850, 23 million. (In 1850, there were fewer than 200,000 people in Iowa, and only 6,000 in Minnesota.) Today, those distinctions are dimmed if not forgotten through assimilation, intermarriage, and the tidal waves of post-1850 immigration in which all pre-1850 arrivals are together engulfed; in another 500 years, the fact that they were once distinct will probably be forgotten except by a handful of historians.

Patrick and Anne Ney had seven children, of whom one — Mary — died in childhood. The others, all born in Arcola, Indiana, before 1870 (with the exception, as noted of John, who was born in Sandusky, Ohio) were:

Sarah. Never married. No issue.
Patrick. Never married. No issue.
Michael (later Marshall). Married, two children: Virgil and Norma.
Christopher. Married. No issue.

Edward. Married twice. First wife died. One child by first wife died at birth.
Judge John J. Married twice. First wife died. Four children by first wife — Philip, Genevieve, Francis (Frank) and John J.

(With the exception of Judge Ney and Christopher Ney, whose careers are described in the text, all known material on Patrick Ney's other children is given in Appendix B. Material on their only known cousins, the children of Patrick's brother Edward, is also given in that Appendix.)

So of seven children born to Patrick Ney, one died in childhood; two never married. Of the four who did marry, one (Christopher) had no children; and one (Edward) had a child who died young. Only two, the Judge and Marshall, had children who survived to adulthood.

As far as we know, only one of the Judge's four children — John J. — had children (John & Edward Ney). Only one of Marshall's two children, Norma, had children.

The net result is that the Ney line has been atypically slim. Most pioneer families of the mid-1800s with a large number of children surviving into adulthood — six in this case — today number their descendants in the hundreds. Patrick and Anne Ney have fewer than two dozen great-great-great-grandchildren. And at this writing, only two (Nicholas and Colleen Ney's two young sons, one just born) with the surname of Ney. The odds against the near-elimination of the male line, and against such a small descendant rate, must be long, indeed. But it has happened in the case of the Neys, primarily because of a low marriage rate, and — even if married — low or zero birth rates.

Patrick's son, John, the judge-to-be. Looks about 30, so photograph taken c. 1882. Resembles Stacey Keach, but so do many late-19th-century men.

Now, with the origins of the American line established, I am back in Independence. To this town came Judge Ney (not yet a judge, just an aspiring lawyer, an 1874 graduate of Notre Dame) in the 1870s. Here he married, here his children were born, and here he began what was to be a relatively illustrious career.

Looking for background on the Neys in Independence, I am given the name of Lans Flickinger, a local lawyer interested in the

history of Buchanan County. I call him and an immediate appointment is arranged. He awaits me with a warm welcome. 'Researching the Iowa bar is my avocation. Your grandfather was such a prominent jurist; I know all about him.' I am amazed that he is there, almost waiting. In his office the years peel away. For him, Judge Ney and his ghostly peers are alive and irresistible. He produces copies of old obituaries, etc. I show him a very good photograph of the Judge. His eyes glisten. 'Would you like a copy?' 'Would I!?' I promise to send one from Florida. I tell him I would like to try to find the house in which the Judge lived. I think of the local newspaper files, but he suggests the courthouse, gives me a name.

He also gives me a copy of the Judge's write-up in *The History of Buchanan County*.

The women in the tax collector's office have, evidently, no pressing duties and all three throw themselves into the search. (This is the Middle West, plenty of time and no competition for it, and such a desire to help.) They flip through the enormous old ledgers and updated computer records with remarkable dexterity. Judge Ney lived, they declare, at 230 South 3rd Street. But the house has been torn down and replaced with another.

They suggest one last crosscheck, just to be sure the number is correct, with Maxine, who also works in the courthouse, and 'knows a lot about the history of Independence.'

Maxine tells me she lives near the house, and it has not been torn down 'I know that house. My own house is on the same street. That house has been covered with some sort of siding, but it's an old house — you can tell by the Victorian windows. Probably is your grandfather's house.'

'I'll take a look.'

'Don't be too disappointed. It's been rented for a long time . . . you know what happens.'

Outside I pass the nearby doorway, next to the fire department, leading down to the small rooms of the Buchanan Genealogical Society, where I find the old plat of Monti/Buffalo Creek.

I ask Donnie Cook, the custodian, if her family had been in Buchanan County long.

'Since 1848.'

'Beats mine by about twenty years.'

Phil Gunderson, my cousin (now deceased), a banker who lived in Madelia, Minnesota, 150 miles north, same kind of town as Independence, had explained the Upper Middle West pioneering sequence to me. First to come, around 1830-40 were a few settlers of English descent, usually poor farmers looking for better land than what they had in the east. Then lots of Germans and Irish immigrants, with the Scandinavians close on their heels, all coming directly from Europe.

Across the street from the courthouse is the large, cavernous Catholic Church. I have been in it once, at the service for my father in the winter of 1974. He had specified burial in Independence, and so we — Marie, Ed, and I — came here with the casket. There had been no Ney in Independence since 1925 and, naturally, no one remembered the name, and no one came to the funeral except us and a six-man contingent from the local

American Legion post because John J. was a veteran of the First World War. The nine of us in a cold church which could hold hundreds. When we went to the cemetery afterwards, an Amish gravedigger was waiting nearby for the brief graveside service to conclude so he could fill it in. His buggy and horse waited with him.

Flickinger told me that in Judge Ney's time in Independence (around 1875-90), the town had two Catholic churches, one for the Germans and one for the Irish, necessary because the two were always fighting. Hard to believe, but evidently true. He added that one of the Judge's strengths was his ability to work with Germans, who helped elect him to his judgeships. Well, he looked German, and was stern in private life, so the local Germans must have recognized him as one of their own who had inexplicably wound up in the other camp.

I find Judge Ney's house late in the day and agree with Maxine that it is ugly. But the original lines are not bad, and if the siding was removed and the place redone it would not be unpresentable. I try to imagine the young Mayor Ney leaving for the day's work, the children off to school, the young mother alone.

Before leaving Independence, I summarize the Judge's career from all the obituaries and eulogies:

As noted, he was born in Sandusky, Ohio, June 8, 1852. He attended school in Arcola and Fort Wayne, Indiana. He later attended Notre Dame University, where he received his law degree in 1874. He did post-graduate work at Notre Dame until 1875, and then began to practice law in Independence, Iowa, as a member of the law firm of Lake, Harmon, and Ney. A year later, he formed the partnership of Bruckart & Ney.

In 1877, he was elected city attorney of Independence, and, in 1878, mayor. At that time, he dissolved his law partnership and practiced alone.

In 1884, he was chosen to fill the unexpired term of Judge B. W. Lacy, who had resigned as Judge of the 10th Judicial District. He was twice re-elected to that post, serving on the bench from 1887 to 1894, when he moved to Iowa City, where he lived for the rest of his life.

He became a law professor at the University of Iowa in 1894, a position he held for a number of years. He also maintained a large private law practice until his death July 18, 1921.

He married Frances Emily Colby October 3, 1878. She was born in 1860, the daughter of Abram Usher Colby and his wife, Mary. She died when only 33 years old, September 14, 1893. She was the mother of the Judge's four children. (And of a daughter, Marian, who died at birth.) Her father had come to Chicago, where she was born, from New England, where Colby is an old name.

In 1904, the Judge was married again, to Anastasia Mullin, who survived him.

Judge Ney was a man of his times, hardworking and ambitious. He was highly respected by his peers and considered a leading citizen of the state. One segment of one eulogy, from the *Press-Citizen*, of Iowa City, is indicative of his position:

Judge Ney's record on the bench was remarkable. Few if any jurists in Iowa achieved the high distinction he won, as a judge whose instructions were pre-eminently fair, well-grounded on the surest and safest of law; and clear and succinct to a remarkable degree for the guidance of juries, and the aid of the bar.

Phenomenally few reversals of Judge Ney's rulings were handed down by the supreme court of Iowa during his service as a judge.

There was nothing particularly unusual about the Judge, apart from being non-Irish in appearance and stolid behavior, and in marrying a woman of Old American/English rather than Irish stock. In retrospect, he seems a typically respectable, Protestant-work-ethic-type, a turn-of-the-century small-city worthy. But if not unusual, he was also not usual, given his cultural and religious background.

I go from Independence to Iowa City, about 70 miles to the south, where Judge Ney spent most of his professional life, and where his son John J. Ney went to high school and university. It must have been very quiet in those days in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Today, it is far from that simplicity. A bustling university town as well as the state capital. Many students from all over the country as well as from abroad. Among other attractions, the university boasts the Iowa Writer's Program.

Judge Ney wouldn't recognize it; neither would John J., who saw it as recently as the early 1970s.

I was expecting to see young men and women off the Iowa farms, but they are conspicuously missing. I am told that they go to Iowa State University, at Ames, a very different place, where the farm youths go because of the extensive agricultural programs.

This is the summer of 1993, the year of the terrific floods along the Mississippi and Missouri basins. The Iowa River has overflowed in Iowa City, and caused much damage. Some roads are still underwater.

AMES, IOWA

Ames is about 130 miles west of Independence and 30 miles north of Des Moines. It is where Christopher William Ney, a brother of the Judge and a more interesting Ney, I think, lived the last ten years of his life as a recluse and died in 1927. When a tree fell on him!

On the way to Ames I pass through Des Moines. At first the flood damage is not that obvious, but then I find the place where the Raccoon River overflowed and it is grim.

The State University at Ames sprawls along the western edge of Ames. In England it would be red brick; here it is pale stone. It is actually quite large, and there is much more than agriculture going on.

What I know about Christopher Ney from his obits, plus a write-up in the National Cyclopedia of American Biography: Born in Arcola, Indiana, October 28, 1869, son of

Patrick and Anne. Was brought up on the Independence (Monti) farm, went to public schools in Independence, attended Iowa State University, and obtained law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1894. Practiced law in St. Paul until the Spanish-American war broke out. Joined up, was an officer, mustered out in the Philippines in 1901 as first lieutenant, stayed in Manila, founded and edited the *Manila Tribune*, first English-language newspaper in the Philippine Islands.

Later appointed by Governor General Taft (who became president of the US in 1908) as governor of the province of Nueva Viscaya. Left that post in 1905, and then practiced law in Manila until 1913. Married a Lucinda Ansbro in Manila in 1906. She was there as a teacher. She died in 1908. According to John J. Ney, she was pregnant and returning to the United States to have the child when she went into premature labor and died on board ship nearing San Francisco. Christopher was devastated. After leaving Manila in 1913, he took some more law courses at the Brooklyn Law School, and also studied at Columbia. In 1917, he joined the Army as a private (he had been an officer in the Philippines), and served in France. After the Armistice, he stayed in Paris and attended the Sorbonne.

He returned to the United States in 1920, but abandoned the practice of law. (According to family hearsay, saying, in response to a question as to why, 'Because it is repulsive.') Instead he settled in Ames, where he worked as a day laborer, lived as a hermit, had a lot of books, and died February 7, 1927, as noted, when a tree fell on him. He was 58 years old.

Most interesting face in old photographs. Large, liquid eyes, high forehead, rather handsome, aura of intelligence, discipline and sensitivity.

This was enough to intrigue me, and I wanted to know more, if possible. Albeit on a small scale, he had duplicated the T.E. Lawrence experience — after a brilliant military (and, in Lawrence's case, also literary) career, came the descent into obscurity, then the return to military service in the ranks after having been an officer (Lawrence joined the RAF in the 1930s as a private), and the grotesque form of death (Lawrence died in a motorcycle accident, thrown from his machine — given him by George Bernard Shaw — after a high-speed crash). Christopher Ney had wanted out, supposedly because the death of his wife had opened his eyes to what he (like Conrad) grew to believe was the true character of life: implacable and random cruelty which ruled out plans or hopes. If one accepted life as it was, one gave up and tried nothing. The eternal optimism of the immigrant dream had received a severe check, and in the second generation.

> Of course, the Middle West has always been home to eccentrics, a hotbed of madmen. See Sherwood Anderson, Masters in *Spoon River Anthology*, the priest in Fitzgerald's story, 'Absolution', etc. They were the inevitable other side of the narrow piousness.

In Ames I hope to learn more. The university library seems a good place to start, and I head there. Am directed to the Archives Department. Speak to the receptionist, who evidently decides I deserve the head, a pleasant woman who comes out of her office. I tell her I am looking for information on a great-uncle. She asks the name.

'Ney,' I say.

'Christopher Ney?'

'Yes.'

'That's interesting, we were just speaking about him last week.'

Naturally, can hardly believe such coincidental serendipity.

'You were?'

'Yes, Farwell Brown and I. Farwell is a local historian, and does articles for the local newspaper. He was here last week, and Christopher Ney's name came up. Farwell can remember his death — he was a boy in Ames then, but he can remember it.'

She can supply me with some obits, but tells me Farwell can do more. She suggests I call him, and I do. He is most accommodating, and says he will be there in an hour.

He comes, with a grandson (grown, going to the University of North Carolina). He is in his early eighties, seems twenty years younger, and is, obviously, most accommodating.

He spreads out his obituary copies, and holds one up. 'This is the front page of the *Des Moines Register*, February 13, 1927.' In the center of the page is a picture spread and text: 'Life Story of Christopher Ney is Drama of Mingled Success and Disappointment.' The photographs include a copy of his commission as island governor from Taft; himself as he looked when in the Philippines; and two shots of his wretched shack in Ames. The first couple of paragraphs of the long obituary set the tone:

> When the buglers sounded taps and the soldiers' rifles cracked in salute over the fresh grave of Christopher W. Ney in St. Boniface cemetery in St. Paul yesterday, it was the last mortal honoring of a man whose life had been a blending of success and tragedy into a philosophy.
>
> For Christopher Ney, college graduate, attorney, army officer, editor and publisher, government official, and last of all a forlorn recluse, had tasted all the dregs as well as of the spiciest wines of life.
>
> The new grave is beside an old one. In that old one are the mortal remains of the wife who died soon after their marriage. Her death threw the shadow of despair over Ney's life, and sent him hurtling down from the pinnacle of an island governor to the wretched existence of living his last years in a secluded one-room shack on the edge of Ames.

'It's remarkable that the *Des Moines Register* would put him on its front page,' Farwell says. 'But the story appealed to the popular imagination. I know it struck me. I was a teenager here in 1927, and I can remember reading about this recluse who lived in a hut and was killed by a falling tree. Then the *Ames Tribune* story came out about his background, and ending up in the shack, and then the *Des Moines Register* obituary, and all of a sudden he was famous here, and I've been interested in him ever since. I'm in the middle of preparing an article on him for the *Tribune*.'

'You must send me a copy.'

'Oh, I will.'

He shows me an article about Christopher Ney donating quantities of books to the college library. (He had attended Iowa State before going on to the University of Minnesota.) A sentence catches my eye: 'In his one-room hut was found a neat pile of typewritten papers, many thousands of words on a book he was writing.'

A handwritten note is at the bottom of the clipping: 'Friend of our little daughter, Marguerite, through whom we became friends of Mr. Ney, and enjoyed that friendship until his death.'

'That copy is from the archives here,' Farwell explained. 'The comment was written by Mrs. Burroughs, the wife of Father Burroughs, the Episcopalian priest in Ames. I think the little girl, Marguerite, is still alive.'

'How would I find out?'

'Ask Susan North, the librarian at the public library in Ames. She's in touch with a lot of people.'

'And this reference to the book he was writing?'

'Ask Susan about that, too.'

'I appreciate everything.'

'No, it's my pleasure. I've thought about Christopher Ney from time to time for many years. And I finally get to meet a relative.'

Susan Cook turns out to be as helpful as everyone else. She will find out about Marguerite Righter (married name) — if she is still alive, and, if so, where she is — from the church. I need to find out if Christopher Ney left a will for probate, the only way I can think of tracing the typescript, and she steers me to a friend in the courthouse. But no will can be found, and I assume the typescript is lost for good. This later turns out to be the case; and Marguerite Righter, although still alive in New Hampshire, does not —

Patrick's son, Christopher, taken in Manila c. 1907 when he was practicing law there. Note large, liquid eyes, air of intelligence and style.

cannot, perhaps — respond to my note.

The next day, finished in Ames, I head north for St. Paul. It is on my way, and I shall have a look at Christopher's Ney's grave in St. Boniface Cemetery.

Ames has been a revelation of sorts. The obituaries all referred to Christopher as a 'member of a prominent Iowa family,' and detailed the accomplishments of his brother, the Judge, and the rest of his siblings: Marshall, also an attorney, and Patrick and Sarah, 'large property owners in Texas.' He had been headed in the same respectable direction, but something had snapped and he ended up at the opposite end of the social/financial scale. But now he appeared the most interesting member of his family. He was certainly so to Farwell and the rest of the locals involved in Ames and Iowa history.

Was that fair? Was it tenable? He had opted out because his wife had died — that was weak, was it not? Well, yes and no.

He was quoted in one of the obits as writing (evidently discovered in his papers): 'My giving up the law was due to no one thing in particular, but rather to a combination of circumstances in general. I was footloose. I did not have the "little family" of the average professional man, and being somewhat of a poetic idealist I let the repulsive realities of the profession get on my nerves where the stern necessity of daily bread for others would have forced me to overlook many disagreeable things. Too much idealism on my part, and too much realism in the practice of the law, might therefore be taken as the first and main part of my answer to the charge of quitting the profession.'

A balanced comment; he is able to see all sides. Family hearsay was correct; he had said the legal profession had realities which were 'repulsive', but within a context. Still, he was implying that without the financial necessity, the law is 'disagreeable' if not altogether repulsive.

If his wife had not died, he would have had the 'little family', and would have had to practice, and would not have been able to quit and philosophize. So . . . ?

Grim description of shack: 'The tiny shack he lived in here was almost devoid of furnishings. Nothing but a single chair, a decrepit cabinet and a stove he had made himself. A box and a straw tick mattress, without springs, served as a bed.'

Another quote from him, as noted earlier: ' I am part of the sadness of America, but that, too, has its place.' Pure Fitzgerald, could have come out of *The Crack-up*. Echoes of *Spoon River*, too. Poetic balance to the sentence, natural writer.

> Sadness certainly has more than its place in America — dominant in our truly great men, and writers. Examples: Lincoln, popularly our greatest man, and a writer as well, was definitively sad. Melville sad; so, essentially, was Henry Adams. Fitzgerald as noted. Hemingway ended in sadness. Eliot spent his whole life trying to figure out how to find the theoretical if not the actual joy or non-sadness in life. *The Waste Land* is essentially sad. *Four Quartets* is not essentially sad, although it starts from sadness. Then it goes on to something else, but that's a rare ending.
>
> Can be claimed, especially now, that sadness permeates everything American: in retrospect, permeates everything we've ever done in America. A sad country, sad from the beginning. The ominous forests and rivers, the 'necessary' elimination of the Indians and the old character of the land. Its mark on everything and everyone. Not joyous, in the sense that . . . oh, the Mediterranean might be. Even in England, in places, there was joy.

Come, come, be fair, there was joy here too in a lot of different ways. Conceded. It's not that it never existed. Yes, joy in the Revolutionary War, all up and down the eastern seaboard. And probably joy in the Union Army when they knocked off the south. Could probably think of a lot more. Certainly there was pioneer joy, being able to move and start over when the soil ran out, etc. And all the individual joys. But as the great writers knew, there was sadness under everything (see Adams for the most specific details), and now it's burst out. No joy now except in 'making it'. Which is not real joy, slow and permanent, but the orgasmic (see *Gatsby*) quick fix.

Is that quite right? Wasn't the early joy, despite the hard work in pioneer America, greater at first and then less, a slow, general downgoing rather than a complete absence from the start? The truth probably lies between. Joy always there in some places and people. And downgoing in others. And never present in some. Certainly muted in the Neys, right from the start. And in a mere two generations — one if you are counting from American-born — the Neys produce Christopher, who joins the great writers in perception if not execution. Although, without his writings, we can't even be sure of that.

(He doesn't claim sadness was all, as some of them did, just a part. But that was 70-odd years ago. Safe to assume that if he, like Melville, Adams, etc., saw the modern world, all of them would reel back in disbelief?)

Of course, to most people, then and now, saying, as Christopher Ney did, that he was 'part of the sadness' meant living in dramatic destitution in a hut and doing menial jobs. A total dropout and failure. True, that sort of economic 'sadness' was not the usual condition then, or now. But his circumstances were the result and not the cause of his being part of the sadness, which was interior and could affect the rich man as easily as the poor man.

He had apparently abjured society after the death of his wife. If we could only lay hands on that typescript! Without it, no way to know whether he is lovesick husband or heroic pioneer of reality. But if only lovesick husband, then how explain the encompassing poetic remark — 'I am part of the sadness of America, but that, too, has its place.'

If the Neys are a joyous family (!), he is not essential to their history. If they are sad, he is paramount.

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

This is the last of the towns and cities in the Middle West of importance in tracing the Neys, following Independence, Iowa City, and Ames, all in Iowa. St. Paul is where John J. Ney came to live and work after WWI. He was married near here, and his two sons, Edward and John, were born here. And it is here, too, that Christopher is buried.

Calvary is a huge old cemetery in the north end of St. Paul. I drive through, looking for the right section and lot, but such numbers as I can see are useless. I need a map, and the cemetery office has closed at five. But the cemetery itself is open until dark. I go back, up one road and down another, past a tremendous collection of mausoleums and obelisks and pediments, etc.

Am ready to give up and come next day when I see ANSBRO on a raised stone.

On the stone the text reads:

Lucinda Ansbro-Ney
Dutiful daughter of Martin and Sarah Ansbro
Beloved wife of Christopher W. Ney
Born March 4, 1870 — died February 1, 1908
Never can Thy place be filled
Save with tender, helpful memories
Through which pain and grief are stilled

Sarah Campbell
Wife of Martin Ansbro
Died December 18, 1898
At rest

Christopher is not on the stone. I look around in the twilight and find him under a flush headstone a little distance from the main stone. Almost overgrown.

The text on that headstone reads:

Christopher W. Ney
Husband of
Lucinda Ansbro
1869 — 1927
Co. D, 13th Minn 1898
Co. C, 11th Engrs A.E.F.

Interesting that his primary identity is as husband of Lucinda. The wording his choice? Shall never know. He had a military funeral, which might explain the presence of his two terms of service. Again, his choice, rather than the 'lawyer, statesman', etc. of the obits? Certainly fitting for the failed recluse, buried like a charity case in a corner of his wife's gravesite, with his name unmentioned on the main stone. Which is not pejorative, but in admiration of the esthetic correctness; I assume he would not have had it otherwise.

(Parenthetical: Where is Martin Ansbro buried? Why not here? Another wandering husband? Death in a foreign land? In one of Christopher Ney's obits, Lucinda is described as being from a pioneer Minnesota family. (Who was not in those days?) What is Ansbro? Certainly not Irish. Nor is Campbell, mother's Scottish maiden name. Unusual for a Campbell to be in a Roman Catholic cemetery, unless — possibly — from some Hebridean sept which held to the Old Faith. Lastly, an idle question: What Ansbro agreed to Christopher's burial there? Mother died in 1898, Lucinda in 1908 before any such arrangements would have been made, and most doubtful that father survived until Christopher's death in 1927. Come to think of it, since mother died ten years before Lucinda, odd that she is not at top of stone text — moved from somewhere else? Stone is definitely post-Lucinda. And if arrangements were made for Christopher early on, why

isn't he on main stone? All slightly out of focus. Attempts now and later to find out more about Ansbros are futile.)

(Also parenthetical: Lucinda died at the beginning of February, as did Christopher. As did Marian. As did Sue. There may be others whose death dates are not available. February evidently a mortal month for Ney wives and some Neys. John J. died January 27, quite close to February.)

The site is a good one, atop a little hill, some splendid statues of Civil War generals nearby, looking out and a bit over St. Paul. RIP, Christopher Ney.

THE NEXT GENERATION, THE JUDGE'S CHILDREN:

(Judge) John J. Ney and Frances Colby Ney had four children (another, Marian, died at birth):

Philip. Can find out nothing about him. Can see from obituaries of Judge Ney, etc., that he was living at various times in Mason City, Iowa; Oklahoma City (1923), etc. Don't know if he had children or not. For some reason, John J. Ney was not in touch with him. Don't ever remember hearing his name.

Genevieve. Again, know nothing about her. Remember Marie Ney saying that she lived in New York City when they (Marie & John Ney) were there in 1920s. From old obituaries of Judge Ney, see that she was referred to as Genevieve Matthews, so was married. Don't know if she ever had children.

Frank (Francis). Joined the Army at the age of 18 and served in the Spanish-American War. Later became successful insurance executive in Minneapolis, co-owner of his own company and, ultimately, the first Ney millionaire. Married Ora Hewitt, and they were childless. He and John J. Ney were friends, and remained in close touch throughout their lives.

John J. Married. two children: Edward & John.

John J(oseph) Ney was born March 2, 1889, in Independence, Iowa. His childhood was not happy. His mother died when he was only four, and his busy father had little time for his four children. There was a housekeeper, but when John J. was only seven he went to live with his bachelor uncle, Patrick, and spinster aunt, Sarah, on the nearby farm. He remembered the next years as hard work and rough schooling. The one diversion he recalled with pleasure was playing chess in the evenings with the local priest. The boy was a remarkable chess player, and rarely lost a game to any adult in the area. (In all the games he and I had together when I was a teenager, I never won.) When he was old enough for high school, he came back to his home in Independence.

He attended the University of Iowa, graduating in 1912. He majored in languages, French as well as Greek and Latin, with a minor in European history. (He could read Greek until the end of his life.) He was also played football, at tackle, and earned two Big Ten letters, putting him among the few who had ever done so in the days when Big Ten football was beginning to set the standard.

Judge John J. Ney, c. 1915, looking quite Teutonic and judicial.

He often spoke about his father's plans for his future. 'In my senior year at Iowa, my father asked me what I wanted to do. I told him I wanted to go into the Foreign Service. He had another suggestion, that I go on to law school. With his connections, experience, and guidance, he was confident that I could have a political as well as a legal career. I would have the credentials, right down to the football letters. I could become district attorney in Iowa City, then state attorney general, and, finally, United States senator. It was an interesting idea, but the law and politics didn't appeal to me, and I did not take him up on it.'

To the Judge, being a United States senator was the pinnacle, the ultimate definition of success. He himself had not been able to reach it, but with his help his son might. He was disappointed when the son declined the offer.

For reasons never really explained satisfactorily, John J.'s plans for the Foreign Service did not mature. Instead, he went into business, joining the American Radiator Company in 1912, and going to work for them in Duluth, Minnesota.

He would work for American Radiator from then until his retirement in 1954, 42 years broken only by his Air Corps service during World War I. The company manufactured heating supplies — boilers as well as radiators — and was (and still is), one of the largest corporations in the country. Much later, it merged with Standard Sanitary, which manufactured bathroom equipment, and became even larger. He was to have, as shall be seen, a spectacularly successful career with the company in the 1920s.

The first Neys had looked to the law, teaching, and military service as the roads to success. Their primary consideration was not making money but being in traditional and honorable professions. Perhaps they still had the European notion that trade was demeaning. Marshall Ney's only son, Virgil, continued in that direction as a regular Army officer and, later, university professor. But the Judge's sons chose business.

The judge's son, John J. Ney, as a young businessman in St. Paul just before WWI.

In a few years, John J. was posted from Duluth to St. Paul, and a few years later, in 1917, he joined the fledgling US Air Corps for service in WWI. Part of his early training took place at Princeton University, where he saw the East for the first time. The Air Corps was an elite organization, largely composed of Ivy League men. John J. was never a snob, but he had innate esthetic discrimination and appreciation, and found that he was comfortable with people and surroundings far more sophisticated and attractive than anything he had known in the Middle West.

He went overseas as a first lieutenant, and came back a captain. He flew a number of missions, but later spent most of his service in France as a bombing instructor. His squadron was based near Tours, and because he was one of few American officers who spoke French, he became a desirable guest for French aristocrats around Tours who wanted to entertain Americans.

(He kept those relationships for life. In his papers, I found a large correspondence covering over forty years from those French friends — mostly notes and cards in spidery handwriting. I think of him writing back from his office desk, especially from St. Louis in the unhappy days of the Depression. Incidentally, he went back to France in the late 1950s, after retiring. Many of the old correspondents were still alive and they welcomed him in their houses and chateaus. What a strangely tenacious and longlived relationship on both sides. Compensation, in some small degree, for his never having had the Foreign Service career he wanted. He demonstrated, if only in

miniature, that he could have represented his country quite ably, an ability that his son, Edward, would bring to full flower as the United States Ambassador to Canada.)

A last wartime detail: He also had uniforms made in Tours of a beautiful and incredibly enduring French whipcord, and kept them until he died.

Before going back to work in St. Paul, he spend several months in New York City, enjoying himself after the Armistice. This was an out-of-character interlude which came about quite by accident. In St. Paul he had known John Colton, then a newspaper reporter, who had moved to New York. In 1919, on his return from France, he looked Colton up, and accepted an invitation to stay for as long as he wished. Colton would later (1922) write *Rain*, the famous play based on Somerset Maugham's short story, and make his name, but even in 1919, he was a part of the New York theater world. And through him, John J. was introduced to that world. 'We had a wonderful time,' John J. said years later. 'Colton knew everyone, and we were asked everywhere. I can remember, for instance, a picnic up the Hudson with John and me and the two Bennett girls, Joan and Connie, Richard Bennett's daughters, and . . . '

John J. Ney, in France in the American Air Corps during WWI. The severe haircut was a military fashion of the time.

Then back to St. Paul and American Radiator. And marriage, in 1921, to Marie E(sther) Noonan.

Marie was the daughter of Edward and Jenny (Sullivan) Noonan. (Material on Marie's family, especially her father, is given in detail later.) She was born in Minneapolis on

January 18, 1895. Her father, a land owner and speculator, was well-off, and she was brought up in comfortable circumstances, along with her younger siblings, Alicia and Harold. She graduated from West High School in Minneapolis, and, in 1916, from St. Mary's College, in Winona, Minnesota. (It was rare in those days for both husband and wife to be college graduates, as both she and John J. were.) She wanted to be independent and work for a time before marrying, and in those days teaching was one of the few careers open to women. She obtained her certificate, and became a grade school teacher in Hibbing, Minnesota.

(Years later, Marian Ney asked Marie where she had taught, and Marie replied, 'Only up in northern Minnesota, during the First World War, and I can tell you we had a wonderful time. Lots of officers always on leave. Dances on the Iron Range all the time, we thought nothing of driving thirty miles in sleighs to a dance, and back the same night . . . ' Marian, later, in private to John C.: 'The Iron Range?' John C.: 'The Mesabi Range, in northern Minnesota, the country's main source of iron ore.' Marian: 'I didn't know. When she was talking about dancing on the Iron Range, I had visions of polkas on hot stoves . . . ')

John J. and Marie Ney lived in St. Paul from 1921 until 1927, when American Radiator moved John J. east, to Boston for a year and then to New York. In St. Paul, they had a house on Goodrich Avenue, one block south of and parallel to Summit Avenue, St. Paul's most fashionable street, located at the top of the steep hill overlooking the Mississippi.

St. Paul, the capital of Minnesota, is older and smaller, and both shabbier and more elegant (in places) than Minneapolis, the other Twin City, which gradually superseded it in size and as a business center. St. Paul grew up around Fort Snelling, founded in the early 1800s, and became the gateway city to the northwest, mainly because of its rail lines to Seattle, etc. In the 1920s, it was an attractive place. The city is surrounded by lakes, and Marie and John J. summered at nearby White Bear Lake, along with F. Scott Fitzgerald and other St. Paul residents who could afford to do so.

Of course, the winters were long and dark, bitterly cold, and dangerous. John J. Ney: 'One January afternoon, I started to drive home from the office in what seemed only another mild snowstorm. But within a few blocks there was so much snow that the car couldn't go on. I got out to walk the last mile to the house, and ended up barely making it. Those blizzards could put down so much snow so fast, along with the terrific winds and cold, that you could be in danger in your own driveway.' This from a man of unusual physical strength and endurance. John J. was an inch or so above six feet — large for those days — and weighed about 200 pounds in his prime. The picturesque Windy Noonan told me years later that, ' . . . your father was the strongest man I ever saw. In Madelia one day, a bunch of us were trying to push a car out of a muddy ditch, and he came along and waved us off, and lifted *the entire rear end* out of the ditch and up onto dry ground. And we were from the country and he was a businessman!' John J. also told me of terrific winter travels in Montana and the Dakotas before World War I: 'My tonsils flared up in the winter in Montana, and I had to have them out without anesthetic in a small town. Blood everywhere, and then I had to ride several miles in a sleigh afterwards to a hotel.' 'Was it bad?' With a shrug: 'Yes, but there was nothing I could do about that.'

As a teenager in the late 1930s, I once asked him if he had ever hit another man. He: 'Yes, once.' I: 'Where?' He: 'In a nightclub in New York.' I: 'Why?' He: 'He insulted your mother.' I: 'How?' He: 'He came over to our table and said something — I don't wish to repeat it.' I: 'So you hit him?' He: 'Yes.' I: 'And there was a fight?' He: 'Not really.' I: 'You mean it was all over with one punch?' He: 'Yes. He went down; I learned later he had a broken jaw.' I: 'So there you were standing over him, and he couldn't get up?' He: 'I wasn't standing over him, I was sitting.' I: 'You mean you hit him from a sitting position and broke his jaw!?' He: 'Yes.' I: 'Think what you could have done if you'd been on your feet.' He: 'I think we've talked enough about it.'

In retrospect, what was more far interesting than the feat itself was his terseness and his reluctance to see the incident as a credit to him in any way.

He was wholly American in that he was inherently democratic — he acknowledged every man's rights and held every man to recognition of his own. For example, he resigned from a New York club in the 1920s because of a reprimand for violating club policy by bringing a 'dark-looking' man (actually an Italian) to lunch. He did not do so because of a liberal bent (he was not so inclined), but because he would not be told with whom he could associate, his assumption being, I am sure, that any club which could imagine that he would bring an inappropriate guest was not his club. He was stern, but, interestingly enough, servants and employees were unusually loyal to him — because of his ingrained commitment to fairness, I assume.

Both John Colby Ney and Edward Noonan Ney were born in St. Paul, John on May 3, 1923, and Ed on May 26, 1925. John was delivered by forceps, and was badly cut, almost bleeding to death. Fortunately, John J. had the same blood type, and was able to give him the many transfusions needed to save his life.

Because the family moved east when I was four and Ed only two, neither of us have real memories of St. Paul. Photographs show us playing outside in the winters despite the cold.

In 1927, as noted, the family left to go east because of John J.'s business transfer. For practical purposes, it was the end of the Middle West period, which began about 1850, with Patrick, and ended with the births of John & Edward, and the move to the East. There would be long return visits, and there would even be a move back, to St. Louis, for a number of years. But the time of the Middle West as shaping and defining was over. If business and success — in any field — was the point, then the East was the ultimate field of combat and bestower of rewards.

But the Middle Western experience had been important. Instead of a sordid life in eastern slums, those immigrants who went, instead, to the empty but beautiful and sustaining prairie, had time to change from poverty and ignorance to being relatively well-off and educated in peace and dignity. When the time came to go on, they were ready.

In summary, Patrick's six children continued his desire to 'succeed'. And so did his six grand-children. As noted, three of his sons obtained law degrees, and another son and

his one daughter were successful farmers and ranchers. One son, the Judge, was a conspicuous success as jurist and law professor. Another son, Christopher was, until tragedy struck, a soldier, politician and newspaper editor as well as a lawyer. (Even as a 'failed' recluse, he was a quasi-poetic philosopher and writer.)

In the next generation, business became the way up for two of Patrick's grandsons, John J. and Frank. Another, Virgil, loyal to the former professional ideal, had a distinguished career both as an army officer and teacher/writer (his career is outlined later). We do not have information on two other grandchildren, Philip and Genevieve (children of the Judge). Norma, the last of Patrick's six known grandchildren, married and had children, as noted in Appendix B.

Several of Patrick's children and grandchildren gave up or modified their Roman Catholicism, either by outright withdrawal or by marrying Protestants. Of Patrick's six children, all remained Catholic as far as we know, with the exception of Marshall, who became an Episcopalian. Of his six known grandchildren, we know that two, John J., and Frank, remained Catholic; and that two, Virgil and Norma, were Protestants. We do not know the religious affiliation of Philip and Genevieve.

A number of the Neys who remained Catholics married Protestants and/or women of non-Irish descent. Among Patrick's four married sons, we know that two, Marshall and Christopher, married Protestant, non-Irish women. One, the Judge, married a woman of English descent. We do not know the ethnic background of Edward's two wives (the first died), but even assuming they were of Irish background, it would still be only one son in four who did so marry.

In the next generation, of Patrick's six known grandchildren, we do not know the ethnic background of Philip's wife (assuming he married), or Genevieve's husband (we know she married a man named Matthews, not commonly an Irish surname). We do know that Frank, Norma, and Virgil all married non-Irish as well as non-Catholic spouses. John J. married a woman of Irish descent.

When the two tendencies are combined — either giving up Catholicism outright, or of modifying it by marrying Protestants and non-Irish women — the percentage of apostasy is very high for those times, quite unlike the usual American-Irish-Catholic adherence to past patterns from 1870-1925.

As noted, the early Neys in America were un-Irish in appearance and temperament, and these underlying factors became manifest in their choices of spouses. In the end, Patrick's only known descendants were to be those of the Judge and Marshall, both of whom married non-Irish women. And in Marshall's case, a Protestant, as well. (And he himself became a Protestant.) The combination of their own temperaments and their natural affinity for the Protestant work ethic undermined their loyalty to the old faith which the Irish had maintained in Ireland for centuries despite endless persecution. Once they were free to hold it, they could afford to give it up.

It would seem that those Neys had to broaden their cultural understanding. If they married Irish-Catholic women they may have felt — however unconsciously — that they would remain in a closed, relatively cramped domestic world. So they married non-Irish women, and, if necessary and possible, non-Catholic women.

It would not be accurate to say that they were marrying up. Quite the contrary. The wives were not to be the way out (or in) in and of themselves, but a necessary domestic simplification in order to give the husbands a freer hand to make their own ways.

(Of course, as noted in the Preface, the wives marrying into any family traced through the male line change that line. For example, Judge Ney's choice of a wife of English descent meant that his children were not only half-Ney but only half-Irish as well. And with each succeeding generation of Neys, the original American Neyness is cut in half through marriages of either males or females. This is not exact because it does not come out to neat halves — see the protruding Hapsburg lower lip persisting for generations, etc. — but it gives a statistical model of the fairly rapid metamorphosis of any family. If the original progenitor is X, then the first generation is half X; the second, one-quarter X; the third one-eighth; the fourth one-sixteenth; etc. Even though the males will still carry the name X, the characteristics of the original X will be much diluted in just a few generations. It should always be stressed, however, that this generality works on a bell curve. Most characteristics will be changed over time but not disappear altogether; a few can disappear altogether; and a few can persist unmodified)

After all, what America offered all the immigrants was the opportunity, in the profundity of the colloquial phrase, 'to become themselves'. Bottled up for centuries at the lower levels of all European cultures — with Ireland at the very bottom, but not by much when compared with conditions in Scandinavia and some other European locations — America was the miraculous opportunity to forget all that and become . . . themselves. In the case of the Irish and Scandinavians, they had to carry out centuries of catching up in a very short time, and it is remarkable that so many did just that. In truth, they probably could not have done it as a conscious effort; it was more like a compressed spring jumping out to full length on its own once the compression was removed.

The Neys had come, like so many Midwesterners, to believe that they could live their own platonic conceptions of themselves. (See Gatsby, through whom Fitzgerald first described the process.) It was the notion of the time which underlay the whole American surface addiction to success. Except in the East, which did not believe in the limitless, and ruled out platonic conceptions. (See Henry Adams on what Boston's State Street really believed.) And time has shown the East to be 'right', despite the fact that its finest minds — Emerson, Thoreau, etc. — tried to break out of the constricting system. Even Fitzgerald had to be honest in describing the ultimate inadequacy and downfall of Gatsby and Gatsby's beliefs.

Naturally enough, when John J. and his family went east, he had no conception of what was coming. Or even that he was a platonist, and doomed as such. He couldn't have known any of that. The Middle West had prepared him in one way, but had also given him an untenable philosophy. He would fail, not necessarily financially, although that was part of it, but because he couldn't cope with the destruction of the philosophical system under which he — and most of the country — had grown up. However, his descendants . . . but that part of the story should not be anticipated here.

THE EAST

This section, The East, begins in 1927, and ends with the death of John J. Ney in 1974. Of course, Neys continued living in the East after 1974, and the period from then to the present is covered in the last section, Today. As noted in the Preface, 1974 is the demarcation point between the end of the formative past and the present.

John J. was first posted to Boston, and we were there for a year before he was called to company headquarters in New York. At the comparatively young age of 39, he became general manager of sales, a job high up the corporate ladder, with a very good salary. He was a dedicated executive — today he would be a workaholic — and successful in being able to focus his considerable intelligence on a difficult and demanding job. He was also successful in the booming stock market, like everyone else. The result was a dramatic change in his (and our) fortunes. We had an attractive house in Scarsdale, maids, expensive cars, etc. The future seemed assured, promising more of the same indefinitely.

> I remember . . . I was a quiet, bookish child, and can recall doing a lot of reading in the quiet house in Scarsdale. (Ed says, 'As I remember, we lived on Fenimore Road, a straight-on, center-hall colonial house and quite nice.') Parents away a lot, father often staying overnight in New York, mother joining him for dinner, theater. When did see them, they were pleasant, a bit remote . . . a particular black maid who was with Ed and me quite a bit — she is in a few old photographs.

Going to the Fox Meadow School, one of the first all-out 'progressive' experiments. The children sculpted in butter, etc. John J. not enthusiastic, but wasn't it, in retrospect, only part of the Great Bull Market? A great friend at Fox Meadow named Eddie Jones.

New York itself, on the rare occasions we were taken in. The skyscrapers, including the American Radiator building, distinguished by its gold-leafed top. The well-dressed crowds, the great liners at the westside piers. And, for some reason, the recollection of seeing a woman in a red dress, with a wide black belt, standing in a roomful of people — perhaps a cocktail party — with windows behind her high above Central Park.

The tranquility, the peace. The only jarring note I can remember — and it was insignificant — was a blowout on a remote country road. John J. and a friend, both in plus-fours, and Ed and I — all dressed up — bowling along in a large phaeton, John J. driving, and then there was a noise and we were partly in the ditch. (Blowouts far more dangerous then.) No other cars came, and the other man and I had to walk for help. John J. and Ed remained, sitting comfortably in the great, gleaming car with its two windshields. We walked for what seemed an eternity — I was about seven — and finally found a farmer with a team of horses who came back with us and pulled the car out. That is the only New York memory of discomfort of any kind.

Marie, Ed, and I going to Minnesota in the summers at least a couple of times between 1927 and 1931. The red carpet on the train platform for the 20th-Century Limited to Chicago, the beautiful dark wood of the drawing room, the train winding up along the Hudson before it turned west, the Parmelee transfer jitneys for the change in Chicago to the St. Paul train.

And once all of us going to Duluth on a Great Lakes steamer. Probably left from Buffalo. And going to Canada, staying in an enormous hotel in Montreal or Quebec.

In the winters, we went to Florida. For some reason, Marie drove a large LaSalle down (rather than going by train), along with Ed and me. The trip was not easy — many sections of US 1, the only direct route, were rough if not unpaved. Can remember chain gangs in the South working on the roads; and an open pen in the middle of some Georgia town where strange-looking people, shouting and waving their arms, were cooped up — was told later it was the local, primitive, open-air loony bin.

We stayed in Florida for at least a month; over three months the winter Ed and I contracted whooping cough. John J. came later by train for a couple of weeks. Can remember . . . the docks in Miami, the liners, the young black boys diving for pennies, holding them in their mouths, almost being bitten by a coral snake. John J. and his father-in-law, Ed Noonan, going to Havana by boat.

The 1929 stock market crash signaled the end of this pleasant life, although the full scope of the disaster was not clear until 1931. John J. held much of his stock on margin, and made the mistake of continuing to hold it (by borrowing to cover the margin calls), rather than letting his broker sell him out. By the time the free fall was over he was deeply in debt. The dollar amount cannot be established exactly, but from his brief references to it, I recall a figure of about $250,000. In today's dollars, that would have been at least $2.5-3 million.

Worse was to come. According to American Radiator's policy on laying off executives in such a crisis (and all work forces had to cut back at all levels), seniority was the most important factor. Because John J. was still comparatively young (42 in 1931), he had to be moved down to a lower position despite his brilliant record. He was offered the position of sales manager for the lower Midwest, with headquarters in St. Louis. He would have some fifteen salesmen (compared to the hundreds under his submanagers

in 1929) for a territory covering about ten states, mostly in the south. He would be paid $6,000 a year.

He had no choice; he had to accept. But the dream was shattered, and he could not really reconcile himself to that loss. He saw himself as a failure, the first Ney in that position, and was embittered. (In his own eyes, that is; Christopher was a failure to others but not to himself.)

He was a fighter, though, and endured. After WWII, he finally was able to pay off his debts and make enough through good investments to become financially secure for the rest of his life. But that future did not help him in the 1930s.

$6,000 a year in the Depression was not a bad salary. In today's dollars it was $60-75,000, and John J. and Marie were able to afford decent housing, help, private schools for their children (aided by scholarships), etc. Compared with the privation of the millions who were out-of-work and really poor, it was affluent. Except that it was pinched by former standards in New York, and it was difficult if not impossible for John J. He would suffer and wait, but he could not be at peace. To him, St. Louis was a purgatory, a hiatus; as soon as he could escape, he would.

Technically, perhaps, St. Louis was in the Middle West, but it had once been a Southern city, and its post WWI higher-level ties were really more with the East than the Middle West. To John J., it was a mishmash with no real identity.

It took some time, of course, for the change to sink in on Ed and me. Like most children, we would not have been particularly conscious of and disturbed by the drop in material status if it had been handled differently — if it had not been borne in on us. As it was, we were quite conscious of our father's unhappiness, which inevitably set the domestic tone.

> I can remember . . . the house on Westmoreland that we first lived in, rather a handsome place — still is, drove by it a couple of summers ago. (Ed recalls that house, too: 'I particularly remember a Spanish-style house with a very high living room.') Then the duplex on York Avenue, a comedown. The heavy smog pall over St. Louis at that time from burning soft coal. We lived out past the worst of it, but it was still pervasive. Because of it, at least in large part, I had chronic bronchitis — and pneumonia twice, necessitating hospitalization. Hated being sick so much.
>
> Trips to New Orleans with John J. Oysters on the half-shell on cracked ice, sold from sidewalk carts for twenty-five cents a dozen. Arnaud's Restaurant, and old Count Arnaud coming over to greet John J. The charm of the old hotels in the river cities, Memphis and Paducah and Louisville. The legendary Amon Carter in Fort Worth, a friend of John J.'s, drinking from a demijohn in his huge office. John J. coming home bloody from a wreck in southern Missouri on the way back from Memphis. Had crested a hill and driven his big Buick Roadmaster into a hay wagon left in the middle of the road while the farmer shut a gate. He'd gotten a ride back to St. Louis. Covered with blood, but unhurt.
>
> Hester Davis, our black maid and laundress, who was with us during the whole St. Louis period and brought so much sense and understanding. We stayed in touch until she died in the 1970s, not long after John J.'s death.

After attending public and parochial schools for a few years, Ed and I were enrolled in the seventh grade at John Burroughs School, which made a difference to both of us,

especially Ed. I entered in 1935 and Ed a year later. (Although two years younger than I, Ed was a year ahead of himself in school.) Burroughs was an excellent and interesting school, founded in 1923 as a 'progessive' alternative to St. Louis County's top private schools of the day — Mary Institute for girls and Country Day School for boys (both of which are still active and thriving, as is Burroughs). Burroughs was one of eight new schools nationwide involved in an educational experiment. Because these schools were initiating new methods and curricula in the 1920s for grades 7-12, graduating students did not originally have to take college board examinations, even to enter Ivy League institutions, but were admitted solely on their records and faculty evaluations. The experiment was a success, and by the time we went there Burroughs was nationally known.

The faculty was very strong, and included such teachers as the famous Latinist Charles Baker, formerly at the Horace Mann School and the author of several definitive Latin textbooks.

> Ed remembers . . . Burroughs remains the best of all the schools/colleges/universities I have ever seen. Both you and I were on scholarships for the entire six years, and as I remember you were editor of the newspaper and I became editor of the year book and also president of the junior class, etc.

Ed won the St. Louis Alumni-sponsored Lord Jeffrey Amherst full four-year scholarship to Amherst, a crucial event. Without it, he would not have gone to an Ivy League college — John J. could not have afforded it. And if he had not attended Amherst, his career might well have been quite different.

> I can remember . . . riding out to Burroughs on the 04 streetcar, known as The Junk, which wound out the few miles from Clayton to Price Road . . . the formal dancing evenings at the Cotillion (where I met Marian) and the Fortnightly . . . the football games (both Ed and I played) . . . and much else that was attractive there then . . .

By the time I was in my teens I had a mild interest, primarily sociological, in my background, and asked my father for details. Among other questions: 'I have read that when the Irish started pouring in here, they were considered dirty, drunken, shiftless — not much better than blacks. True?'

He was, as almost always, imperturbable in such a discussion: 'I've read the same thing. But because we were in the Middle West, and respectable and hardworking from the start, we were never subjected to such treatment.'

Non-Irish in appearance and manner, he would declare himself Irish and Catholic if asked, but in such a disinterested fashion that he seemed like a convert to the religion (if not the race itself!) rather than one born to it. He had no Irish friends, and seemed distinctly uncomfortable on those rare occasions when he was faced with Irish 'humor'.

In the summers, Marie, Ed and I went to Minnesota to escape the St. Louis summer heat. John J. had to stay, of course, because of business. We drove the six hundred miles

north from St. Louis in a day. The roads were not as good as today, but there were far fewer cars on the road. We stayed at Ed Noonan's farm at Madelia, about eighty miles south of the Twin Cities, for most of the time, but usually spent a few weeks in a rented place at Grindstone Lake, about a hundred miles north of the Twin Cities, where we had relatives nearby.

Edward Noonan, an illustration of the kind of face — now rare — evolved in and unique to the old America.

To explain the farm, it is first necessary to explain Ed Noonan, Marie's father, and grandfather to Ed and me. He was born in 1865, the year the Civil War ended, and was 70 in 1935. A fine-looking man, tall and slim, who knew how to enjoy life on many levels. He had been poor as a boy, but soon found that he had a talent for making money. 'I discovered that I could buy land in Canada in the 1890s for a nickel an acre, and sell it in the States a year later for twenty-five cents an acre. By the time I was thirty-five, I had made enough money to retire. We won't see days like that again.' He never stopped working — as a land speculator, farm owner, entrepreneur, bank founder and president, and so on — but he didn't have to work. He had lived in Minneapolis until WWI, when he decided to move back to the area where he grew up.

His 360-acre farm just outside Madelia was a gentleman's farm — a type not unusual in the East, especially in Virginia, but rare in the Middle West, especially in Minnesota.

It was a working farm, but it had other features. Half the land was in woods, with a river running through. A genuine hermit, Old Dan, lived in a shack along the river. ('I like having him there,' said Ed Noonan. There was no question that having your own hermit added something.) The usual barns and outbuildings were screened off from the houses by tall hedges and trees. The main house was biggish and attractive, with awnings on all the windows in the summer, comfortable dining and living and sun rooms, big bedrooms. The other house was for the man who actually did the farming — Mr. Hulberry — and his wife.

Mr. Hulberry was not Middle Western, but from New Hampshire, a real Yankee with a twangy accent. How he and his wife had ended up working for Ed Noonan I never knew. An air of formality was always preserved. It was invariably 'Mr. Noonan' and 'Mr. Hulberry', with never a lapse into first names, even during farm emergencies.

Ed Noonan disliked the noise of tractors, so all work on the farm was done by enormous Percheron horses. There were eight of them, and it was a wonderful sight to see them galloping down the lane from the barn to the night's pasture after a day's work, and then rolling in the grass before settling down to graze.

The 160 acres actually farmed was divided into fenced 40- and 20-acre fields, cultivated on a rotation basis. There was always some pasturage, some alfalfa, some oats, barley and, of course, plenty of corn. About forty head of young cattle and, perhaps, eighty sheep were brought in during the spring to be fattened until fall. There were also a few dairy cows, chickens, and hogs. The sum total was a . . . fully working farm, available by simply walking through a gate, and closed off by walking back through the same gate. It was, in short, a most appealing, wonderfully thought-out place.

> I can remember . . . the variety of things to do. We went to the woods with our aunt, Alicia, to pick gooseberries for preserving, rode ponies down the lanes, wandered in the cemeteries (both local graveyards were on or abutted the farm). Later, when we were older and wanted to help, shocking wheat in the broiling sun. The big garden, filled with flowers and vegetables. The canning orgies, my grandmother directing the Scandinavian girls who worked there in the summers. Reading in empty rooms. The cool root cellar in the basement, full in late summer. The rows of canned produce. The great crocks of watermelon pickles. The pheasants put up in two-quart glass jars . . . the linen closets filled floor to ceiling, the brass beds. The night there was some sort of Thurberesque alarum, and Ed Noonan and his wife, Katherine, appeared in matching white nightshirts, he with incongruous shotgun in hand. Both slim and attractive — she with her hair (always up during the day), hanging long to her waist . . . the summer the great horses contracted sleeping sickness, and were kept from going down on their sides (where death was supposed to be certain) by means of tremendous slings of canvas and rope. They hung in the slings for weeks and always seemed on the verge of dying, but all survived. The veterinarian techniques (there were endless shots) may have been primitive then, but the men taking care of those horses knew animals by instinct. There was someone with the horses day and night . . . even the dogs, who always ran under the wagon tongues when the horses were working, somehow escaping the big hoofs, were there all the time . . . memorable to go out there during the night, the yellowish light casting the huge silhouettes on the walls . . .

Ed Noonan knew how to live, as noted — how to enjoy life on many levels. He had his suits made in the Twin Cities, but he was at home in rough work clothes, and loved to take the train ride with his cattle when they went to market. In his words: 'We all get

together in the caboose — the trainmen, the owners and stockmen, playing poker all night.' He still owned a half-dozen farms spread around Minnesota, and enjoyed the adventures inherent in the profit-sharing arrangements he made with the tenants. He was fond of vaudeville, went to see all the old headliners on the Orpheum Circuit (was particularly drawn to Ed Wynn). Liked to travel — to New York City, California, Havana, etc. And to presidential political conventions — he was the perennial Democratic delegate from his district. In his youth had been a good baseball player, and retained a lifelong passion for the game. In the fall, he went pheasant hunting in the Dakotas. He was an excellent shot and seldom brought back fewer than fifty brace, all of which were canned in enormous glass jars.

In Madelia, his days were well-rounded. Up early and out to look at the farm, the day. Paperwork in his office, a fascinating room with a big safe, file cabinets. A straight-razor shave and then off to town, only a mile away. Perhaps a visit to the bank he had founded and of which he was still the majority owner and titular head. Small talk with people on all levels. Unlike many small-town worthies, he was classless, at home with anyone anywhere, and relishing the offbeat. Home for lunch, everyone at the big, round dining-room table. After lunch, playing his violin (fiddle) for a bit. Perhaps a quick nap, then a change into a working coverall and out to his completely outfitted carpenter and machine shop, where he could make or repair almost anything. Later in the afternoon, a consultation with Mr. Hulberry. Then a change for dinner, a couple of straight whiskeys, and another superb summer meal. Perhaps bridge after dinner, either at home with friends or out. Early to bed.

On weekends, perhaps a visit to friends, always attendance at a local ball game on Sundays.

> I can remember . . . going with him to the Murphys, in Blue Earth, about twenty miles away. Dan Murphy, a big man who could have doubled — I saw in retrospect — for William Randolph Hearst, was his counterpart, running Blue Earth County as he, Ed Noonan, ran Watonwan County. Benevolent frogs in amiable ponds. The Murphy house grander than Ed N's, rather like something out of *The Magnificent Ambersons.* Of course, big houses not unusual, but how many with the prairie right outside. The Murphy children always at home, despite being in their 30s and 40s, always well-dressed, all attractive. Leone, actually quite beautiful. Vincent, who had gone to Harvard, a gentle alcoholic whom I amused because I was so full of myself and my 'ideas'. He and I sitting in the big library, the books and paneled walls, the sun on the fields outside, he drawing me out. Dan M and Ed N on some porch in the breeze, fine-looking men with their toddies . . .
>
> On Sundays, Ed N in the morning to a lawn chair under the trees on the front lawn where, for some reason, he always read Goethe. On Sunday afternoons, Ed and I and Ed N off to see the local baseball team play. Ed N elegant in a white linen suit and sitting on a campchair he brought with him. If the game was in some surrounding town rather than in Madelia, we went there. The towns had wonderful names — Sleepy Eye, New Ulm (German settlers). New Ulm also had the forty-foot statue known as Hermann the German, a memorial to that Hermann who had fought the Romans, complete with colossal horned helmet. (Hermann was a shock to the casual driver cresting the hill before going down into New Ulm, and still is. I had forgotten Hermann when, years later, was driving with Phil Gunderson, my second cousin, when we happened to crest that hill and — suddenly — there was Hermann, as formidable as ever.) Many of Ed N's Noonan nephews played on the Madelia team, and — after all, he was the godfather — they always greeted him with

enthusiasm and respect. (Marian and I were to run into one, Windy Noonan, years later in Montana. He didn't have long to live then, but was still working part-time as a big-game guide. At one stage, he had been a professional baseball player — had actually made it to the major leagues for a bit. Marian loved his name as quintessentially American.)

The area was predominantly Norwegian, Garrison Keillor-Lake Woebegon territory. All poor in the Depression, worked heroically. Came to Ed N's farm in a rotation arrangement to pack silo with fresh-cut corn, stalks as well as ears, chopped into silage by machine. Hauled from fields with wagons pulled by horses. Dust, noise, compelling scene. Worked from 4 AM to 9 PM, with five breaks to eat. Trestle tables set with huge meals. The Norwegians still peasants from Old Country. Hard times in the 1930s, but nothing compared to what they and fathers and grandfathers had fled. Because he owned bank on which they were dependent for loans, Ed Noonan was, in their still somewhat alive European tradition, their seigneur. They came to see him at all hours, in peasant tradition. He most responsible, never foreclosed on any of them. As a boy, I couldn't have known that I was seeing old Norway (and old Europe) in a transplanted *tableau vivant*.

Katherine (Sullivan) Noonan, Ed's second wife (the sister of his deceased first wife), in a poignantly Victorian pose c. 1900.

Naturally enough, those days completely forgotten now by their wholly Americanized descendants. Phil Gunderson, who ended up owning the bank, describing the modern Minnesota in about 1980: 'The equipment can do so much, and the yields are so enormous, and the profits are so big that they only work about four months of the year. The rest of the time they're in Antigua, with all the perks.' Quite a change.

The first Noonan, Stephen, Ed Noonan's father, had come from County Clare, Ireland, in the 1830s, and was one of the hardy Irish who opted for the cold northern prairie, settling near Mankato, Minnesota, in the 1850s. The Noonans survived the Sioux uprising in 1862 and other tribulations. As noted, Ed Noonan was born in 1865, of Irish-Scots ancestry. His maternal grandfather, James McCall, was born in Hebron, New York, in 1808, and married a Mary Stuart.

Ed Noonan married Jennie Sullivan in 1893 (see Appendix C for background on her family), and became the father of three children: Marie, born January 18, 1895; Alicia, born October 15, 1896; and Harold, born September 16, 1898. Jennie contracted tuberculosis and died in 1902. He took her to Arizona in a vain attempt to save her life. Characteristically, he was active even at the sanatorium, organizing a baseball team among the male recuperating patients. 'They called themselves The Lungers,' he said later, 'and were not bad.'

Marie Esther Noonan as a girl, c. 1907.

Following the custom of the day for widowers with small children, he married his former sister-in-law, Katherine. They did not have children. My memory of her is of a straight-backed, rather severe, rather distant and formal woman. She was skilled in the Victorian accomplishments admired in her youth: she ran her house impeccably, painted china, along with original watercolors, some quite good. She deferred to her amusing but autocratic husband, but not beyond a certain point. If she felt he had gone too far, she said only one word, 'Edward!', but it was enough. My sense now is that they were happy together in the now-forgotten way people could be at that time.

Alicia, the second of his daughters, was a lifelong spinster and high school teacher. She was not unattractive, and had evidently had proposals, but chose to remain single. She was very kind to Ed and me, an adult who could join with children in escaping the strictures of the adult world, and we were very fond of her.

We only saw Harold once, I recall, when he came one summer from Portland, Oregon, where he had moved in the 1920s. He had moved there when a young man because of some problem in Madelia. He had one child, a son named Riley, who lives near Portland, is married, and has two adopted children.

I can remember . . . Ed N remembering the capture of the Younger brothers just west of Madelia in 1876. 'Nothing else stands out in my memory like that. The Youngers had ridden north from Missouri with the James gang to rob the bank at Northfield, Minnesota — almost 700 miles on horseback. 1400 roundtrip. It was an unsuccessful attempt, and they barely got away, leaving two dead, and Bob Younger was badly wounded. Bob and his brothers, Jim and Cole, were seen north of Madelia, and people for miles around were hysterical. A couple of days later, the Youngers were captured, and my father took us into town to see them. They looked very down, but they made a deep impression on all of us.'

. . . the characters in Madelia, and their poignant names. Turkey Trowbridge, one of the many drinkers. The gypsy-like, saturnine Titigan, who owned a small, shabby farm not far from Ed N's. He was atypical for the area in that he worked as little as possible, had an enormous family, but survived somehow. Ed N liked him because he was offbeat and blandly impertinent.

. . . the summer Ed N cured his arthritis by lying in the sun day after day on a cot. Or so he claimed.

. . . Ed N's amusing letters and use of Twain-like humor, often in doggerel. Here is one example, written to his daughter, Marie Ney, about 1933. Her hypochondria by turn annoyed and amused all family members, especially her father, who had a low opinion of the medical profession. The verse was entitled, *Dream of Mrs. John J. Ney, after years of close connection with the medical trust, vaccines, thermometers, mumps and bumps*:

You can see me with my little broom
about the house each day
Cleaning after kids and pups, for which I get small pay
I like to clean and sweep, and catalogue each disease
But when I go to bed, I fall into nightmarish unease

I see doctors on the ceiling, vaccines on the floor,
Thermometers on the sofa, Ex-Lax by the door
There's vaccine in the water glass, thermometers in the sink
There's medicine in every bite I eat, ipecac in all I drink
The other night about half past three, I nearly lost my head
For I dreamed the goblins had been there and scattered medicine all around my bed

There's vaccine on the window pane
Thermometers on the wall
Vaccine in the refrigerator
Vicks Vapo in the hall
Vaccine on the pillowcase
Vaccine in the bed
And the doctor told my husband I had vaccine in my head

There's vaccine in John's arm, leg and head
There's a thermometer thrust in each end of Ed
Even the poor little wire-hair pup
has his — I give up

Ed Noonan had several brothers, all more or less successful pioneers, especially Steve, who owned some 75,000 acres of wheat land in the Dakotas, but lost most of it to 1930s drought and Depression. But his children and grandchildren flourished in the professions, especially medicine, and there are Dr. Noonans from Bismarck to Seattle. One of the sights of Madelia before Steve crashed was his late summer arrival, driving a large new Lincoln, followed by each of his seven children in new Fords.

A surprising number of distantly related Noonans went to law school and joined the FBI as it became glamorized in the 1930s. There were endless tales of vigils in trees listening to the plots of the famous bank robbers and machinegunners — Pretty Boy Floyd, the Barkers, John Dillinger, and Machinegun Kelly.

In general, the Noonans were quite different from Neys. They were not high-IQ, moody jurists, businessmen and poetic failures, but earthy entrepreneurs, farmers, ranchers, athletes (professional as well as amateur), plungers, FBI agents, and so on. They were not detached, in some degree, from American life, but part of it. They didn't judge it; they lived it and made it.

Even so, Ed Noonan was something of an exception to this unquestioning optimism. And as the Depression deepened, he became less sanguine about the future. As Phil Gunderson recalled in 1980: 'My father, Hans, was head cashier at the bank, and married to Ed's sister, Grace. He had some stock in the bank, and had been there since it was founded. Uncle Ed — your grandfather — came to him about 1939 and said, "I want to get rid of all my bank stock. I'll sell it to you cheap, but you have to come up with the cash in a couple of weeks." It was cheap, but my father had no capital, and he had an awful time raising it. But raise it he did, and the transfer was made. Of course, it was a wonderful deal for us, because the bank is now worth a lot.' Not long after this conversation, Phil sold the bank to a conglomerate for over 10 million dollars. 'I can't foreclose on farmers any more than Uncle Ed could,' he said. (This was when Middle West land values were plummeting in the 1980s.) Phil had been a president of the Minnesota Bankers Association, or some such group, and was respected in the field, but he had the Middle Western ability to see beyond the official line of endless prosperity. 'Ed Noonan wasn't wrong,' he told me, 'just premature. The country is really quite shaky economically; there are bad times coming, maybe all at once or maybe gradually, but coming.' He had an original plan about leaving his $10 million. 'Just gather everyone around the kitchen table and split up the cash.' 'How can a banker do it that way? You need lawyers and wills and accountants, don't you?' He laughed. 'I'm an ex-banker now, and I can do it this way because it's the easiest and simplest,' Perhaps he was joking; I never knew just how he did do it.

Ed Noonan in the sun room. Note quasi-Victorian lamp, and folding doors open to the outdoors.

Ed Noonan died February 19, 1941, and is buried in the cemetery which used to be part of his farm. In recent years, a new highway has been cut through the whole place, and other changes have done away with its old attractiveness. In the cemetery, Phil

Gunderson and Ed Noonan are buried not far from each other, along with other Irish-Norwegian relatives. Katherine Noonan survived her husband by 20 years, dying in 1961.

Marie Noonan as a college senior, 1917.

Ed N was in good health the day before he died, active as always. He had vaulted a fence late in the day, and perhaps that had some bearing on his death in his sleep that night from a stroke. In any case, he died as he had lived — appropriately, and in esthetic balance. No lingering illnesses — he was inconceivable in a nursing home — but quickly and painlessly. He was 75 when he died, and had done well by himself and for others during his entire lifetime. It is difficult to think of a better definition of a good life.

It is true that he and his world depended on the social structure of that time and that place. He fitted into it well, able to exercise the control which was given throughout to men like himself to act in a benevolent rather than a tyrannical fashion. He was, as a contemporary told me years later, 'proud as a peacock,' but he was also humble where humility was indicated — before beauty, life, wit, etc.

He was a revelation to me, but, like most boys — I was seventeen when he died — I didn't know that for a long time. Before I knew him I really did not realize that his kind of life was possible. As it turned out, it was not possible after 1941, but the fact that I had seen it made a great difference to me.

He was cheerful, instructive and kind to Ed and me, but a lot of grandfathers have those qualities. What made him different was what he actually was in himself, the rarity — the very best of what was once meant by 'American' — which comes through in the old photographs of him. It was a type which depended, like any type, on the time and the culture, etc. He and his kind could not exist today, and that is the way life works, etc. But it is important, I feel, that to certain personal knowledge such a man once did exist — more important, really, than that he was also a forebear. (Although, if such a debatable quality as pride in family can ever rise above the comic, it can only do so when one realizes that such a person is actually a progenitor.)

If I had not gone to Minnesota in the summers and been privileged to see Ed Noonan in the flesh, I would never have come to understand and appreciate the Middle West, both in and of itself and as a

Harold Noonan, Ed's son, c. 1928. The dog, Shep, was later a great companion of Ed's and mine.

shaper of the pioneer families on both sides. The actual ties to the Middle West were broken when John J. moved to New York, and neither Ed nor I nor any of our children would ever live there permanently, but the background would be quite incomplete without the understanding and appreciation.

Because of my respiratory problems, medical experts advised going to a university in a dry climate. The choice lay between the Universities of Arizona and Texas. Because of my father's ties to Texas, I went there after graduating from Burroughs in 1941. A year later, Ed went on to Amherst.

After the war broke out in late 1941, I was in defense work on the West Coast. Ed enlisted in the Navy in the summer of 1942 — he was just seventeen — and went into active service in July, 1943. In his words, 'It wasn't so bad, because I went to Williams College for eleven months as an apprentice seaman in the USN. In the 23 months from June, 1942, to May, 1944, I finished three years of college, and was commissioned as an Ensign in early 1945. Soon thereafter, I was trained as an airborne Fighter Director and moved into the Naval Air Corps. It was a bit odd — only 20 of us ever had the "wings" of a Fighter Director. Served on the USS Hornet and was in the Pacific when the war ended in August, 1945. I was soon transferred back to Floyd Bennett Field, in New York, where I waited for enough points to get out of the service in June, 1946. I then returned to Amherst in September, 1946, and graduated in June, 1947. During that period, I became chairman/editor of the *Amherst Student*, etc., etc.'

Marie Noonan during WWI, with officer beau and coat of many furs. Probably taken on the Iron Range (see text).

In September, 1947, three months after graduating from Amherst, Ed began his career in advertising with BBD&O. He was there from 1947 until 1951, then joined Young & Rubicam as an account executive. He has been associated with Y&R, as he puts it, 'in one way or another ever since.' By 1970, he was president of Y&R's international division. In that year he became president, chairman of the board, and CEO of Y&R, a position he held until his retirement in 1986.

In 1950 he married Suzanne Hayes, and they had three children: Nicholas, Hilary, and Michelle. They lived in Darien, Connecticut, until Ed and Sue were divorced in the early 1970s. He married Judith Lasky in 1974, and they have lived in New York City since then.

Taken c. 1935. Man on left is Mort Hayden, Minneapolis banker, on a Madelia visit to Ed Noonan, friend, fellow banker, and quietly authoritative.

In the late 1940s-early 1950s, I worked as a scriptwriter in Rome for various American motion picture companies. I married Marian Wallace in 1954, and we had three children: Sarah, Janet, and Peter. From 1954 until 1974, we lived in Virginia, Jamaica, Florida, and Europe. I pursued a writing career, publishing six books in that period, including three in the Ox series, and Marian was a teacher and remedial consultant. I also was in business in Florida as a land developer.

In the post-war period from 1945 until 1954, when he retired, John J. was able, as noted, to pay off his debts and put aside enough money to carry him comfortably through the rest of his life. He and Marie left St. Louis in 1954, and moved to Cornwall Bridge, Connecticut, where they bought a house. The place was attractive, with about seven acres of woods and open ground. They became part of the community there, where John J. served as a selectman. He was back in the country of his mother's Colby family, and felt at home. They went to Jekyll Island, Georgia, in the winter, and took extended trips to Europe and Mexico. The Cornwall Bridge place became too much to keep up as John J. grew older, and they sold it in the late 1960s, moving to an apartment occupying the second floor of an imposing historic house in Litchfield, Connecticut.

John J. Ney died January 27, 1974 at Jekyll Island, Georgia, a few weeks before his 85th birthday. He is buried in Independence, Iowa, in the family plot, as noted. His wife, Marie, would survive him by 17 years.

It might be said that he was possessed of many desirable qualities, some of which were, unfortunately, thwarted and diminished one way or another — by a most difficult childhood, by going into business rather than into the Foreign Service, and, of course, by suffering financial and career disaster in 1929. I was struck, some years after his death, by his resemblance while alive to George Kennan, the noted diplomat. He looked somewhat like Kennan, had the same shape of head and the same large, liquid eyes, and

he also had the same Middle Western background, and the same analytical ability and physical presence. These resemblances led me to wonder if he could have enjoyed the kind of personal and career fulfillment that Kennan did had the thwarting and diminishing not taken place. If so, he was the victim of wasteful — even tragic — circumstances. It can be argued that anyone should be able to rise above any adversities, but that is often easier said than done.

TODAY

This section covers the period from 1974 to 1995, the year in which this is being written. In those 21 years, Ed's children and mine have grown to adulthood, and we have nine grandchildren.

To take Ed's children and grandchildren first:

Nicholas (Nick) Hayes Ney was born December 2, 1953, in New York City. He graduated from the Darien, Connecticut, High School in 1971, and Hampshire College in 1977. He went on to become a psychologist, earning an MA (1982) and a PhD (1986) from the California School of Professional Psychology. In 1986-7 he held a post-doctoral fellowship at the Stanford Medical Center. He is currently a psychologist in private practice in Palo Alto, California, specializing in chemical dependency situations. He also teaches and consults at Stanford and the University of San Francisco.

Nick's first marriage, to Mamie Williams, 1984-1987, ended in divorce. They did not have children. In 1991, he married Colleen Ann King. They live in Menlo Park, California, and have two sons: Conor Hayes and Hunter Noonan Ney, born July 30, 1992, and June 6, 1995.

Hilary St. Clair Ney was born May 7, 1954, in New York City. She attended schools in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and then went on to New York University, receiving a BA in 1977. She began her internship as an art curator in 1975 at New York's Metropolitan Museum, in the European painting department. She was a research assistant there in 1978-82, and a coordinator of the Museum Prototype Project in 1982-4. In 1986, she finished the requirements for an MA from the Institute of Fine Arts. From 1979 to the present she has been associated with Coen Brothers Films (*Blood Simple, Raising Arizona, Hudsucker Proxy*, etc.). Since 1991, she has been on the board of directors and involved with fundraising and planning for the African Film Festival sponsored by the Film Society of Lincoln Center.

Hilary has been married and divorced twice, and has no children. She lives in New York City.

Michelle Colby Ney was born December 9, 1955, in Northampton, Massachusetts. She graduated from Darien High School in 1974. After working as a radio copywriter, she married John Kilduff in 1981. She and John have owned radio station WTSA, in Brattleboro, Vermont, since 1986. They both work there — John does the morning show as well as administer, and Michelle writes and produces commercials. She also does volunteer work at the local hospital, and served on the Montessori School Board for four years.

Michelle and John Kilduff have three children: Kristina Colby, born December 28, 1983; Kimberly Ney, born May 15, 1985; and Andrew Francis, born June 18, 1987. All three were born in Brattleboro.

Then my children and grandchildren:

Sarah was born April 2, 1956, in Virginia. She attended schools in Palm Beach and Austria, and ultimately graduated from a *gymnasium* (high school) in Salzburg while we were there, and then took a doctorate from the University of Salzburg. Back in this country, she taught English at the college level for a few years, and then went to law school at Notre Dame (where her great-grandfather graduated in 1874), earning her degree in 1992. Since then, she has been working in the federal judiciary system in a number of localities.

In 1980, she married Christian Kern, an Austrian. They lived in West Palm Beach, Florida, until their divorce in 1988. Sarah is the mother of two sons, Alexander, born March 7, 1981, and Nicolas, born February 7, 1985.

Janet was born November 6, 1957, in Virginia. She also attended schools in Palm Beach and Salzburg, and, after returning to this country, graduated from Purnell. She then attended Bryn Mawr College for a year. In 1981, she married John Lay, and they have two children: Alden, born September 28, 1982, and Ian,

born March 13, 1986. They live in Barnstable, Massachusetts, where John has a boat repair business. Janet works as an administrator for a Cape Cod sports facility.

Peter was born in Jamaica, in the West Indies, December 29, 1959. He went to school in Palm Beach and Salzburg, and later attended Farragut. He joined the United States Coast Guard in 1982, and is now a chief petty officer.

In the last twenty years, Ed Ney has had an extraordinarily successful career in advertising and the diplomatic field. In the period in which he was chairman and CEO of Young & Rubicam, 1970-1986, it became the world's largest independent advertising company. And the company pioneered the one-stop or umbrella agency concept, and a diversified global communications framework.

Needless to say, Ed's work did not go unnoticed. The full list of his Awards and Recognitions runs to several pages. He does not feel — nor do I — that the full list is necessary or appropriate here. But because of his unique position in this family, a few highlights must be given: Since retiring from Y&R in 1986, he has been an ambassador (to Canada, 1989-1992, appointed by President Bush), and in business as: chairman of PaineWebber/Y&R Ventures, 1987-1989; chairman, board of advisors, Burson-Marsteller, 1992-present; chairman, Marsteller Advertising, 1995-present.

From 1974 until 1985, when the annual recognitions were discontinued, *US News & World Report* cited him, in its list of the single most influential persons in various fields, as the leader in advertising for nine of those twelve years. He has been a member of the Advertising Hall of Fame since 1988. He has been awarded honorary degrees from a number of colleges and universities, including Amherst and Georgetown.

He has somehow found time in an always-full schedule to give endless hours to business, civic, and educational committees and causes: The Advertising Council; Amherst and Hampshire Colleges (trustee); Council on Foreign Relations; Radio Free Europe Board; Commission on National Elections; National Urban League; Executive Committee of the Grace Commission; and on and on.

Ed's career crowns the Ney — and general American — effort to succeed, achieving the final culmination of that dream. Ed has carried through and completed the initial thrust, especially the penultimate effort which John J. began but was unable to finish. In the post-WWII world, the platonic idealism and dominating fear of failure which had hampered John J. and his generation lost most if not all its power. Lives could be successful in many ways, not just in business, so Ed was able to work in a more realistic climate and under less pressure.

In this period, I myself have continued writing. Mainly on sociological questions, harking back to Christopher Ney's interest during the latter part of his life. For some years I also continued with land development on a modest scale. Marian died in 1991, and since then I have lived as a widower in Florida.

It is interesting that Ed and I have continued — and perhaps concluded — the two themes in Ney life: the drive to success, and 'the blind urge to see, to know, to understand.' The Neys almost seemed to have been bred for the purpose, with a combination of land-derived strength and high-IQ, able to stand endless disappointment and stress without cracking, and to carry out psychologically and genetically determined assignments to the best of their abilities.

Today, of course, times have changed and such drives and urges tend to be considered incorrect, and — even worse — tedious. It is doubtful that our descendants will be so driven, and that may well be for the best.

Ed and I have also continued the move away from the original Ney cultural and religious origins. Neither of us professes Catholicism. I married a non-Irish Protestant. Edward N.'s first wife (the mother of his three children) was an Irish Catholic; his second wife is neither Irish nor Catholic. None of John C.'s children is Catholic. However, Edward N.'s children indicate a reviving interest in Catholicism. And my two Austrian grandchildren are Catholics because it is their father's religion and the one in which he and Sarah agreed they were to be brought up. No matter what the Neys were at the start — Irish, German, or some other mix — the choice of spouses of all kinds has created an entirely different line.

There have been several deaths in the past few years. Marian W. Ney died February 8, 1991, at the age of 67. Marie N. Ney died September 9, 1991, at 96. Suzanne H. Ney died February 8, 1992.

Virgil Ney died earlier, in 1979. I was privileged to know him the last ten years or so of his life and found him a most interesting and amusing man. He was the son of Michael/Marshall, and John J.'s cousin, but some 16 years younger and quite different in temperament. He was a successful professional military man and military historian, serving on MacArthur's staff during WWII, and also as an official historian. During the Korean War, he was chief of the army's Psychological Warfare Section there. After retiring from the army as a colonel, he earned a doctorate at George Washington University, and taught at Georgetown. He was the author of several books, notably *Notes on Guerilla Warfare*, a subject on which he was an expert. The book was widely circulated and cited. He also wrote several books on frontier American forts, and the *Encyclopedia Britannica* articles on Military Training, and Volunteers. He and his wife, Electa, a teacher and a remarkable woman in her own right, lived in Silver Springs, Maryland, when I knew them, in a house filled with pieces collected in the Far East and his military library, which he left to West Point.

Virgil was interested in family history, and I regret not having gone over it more thoroughly with him at that time, but I was not then as interested as he. Now all his notes and research are gone. Electa is still alive, but in her nineties and blind.

As noted earlier, if Ed's and John's children have no more children, the only descendants of Patrick Ney named Ney will be — as far as we know at this time —

Nicholas's two sons: Conor and Hunter Ney. Patrick Ney's descendants through his son Marshall are not in the male line, nor would Genevieve (Ney) Matthews's be, if they exist. Only the descendants of Philip Ney, John J.'s brother, remain a possibility; but it is an extremely slim one. This near-disappearance is quite atypical for a progenitor who came to this country a century and one-half ago and had five sons who lived to adulthood.

The Neys are, as noted in the Preface, a story, but not an unusual one. Interesting, perhaps, for family members, but not for others. And even the interest of family members is questionable. (Ed's career might well be of general interest — he has been approached by agents and publishers because of his unique contributions and position. But so little of that material is given here that it would be insufficient for the general reader.) However, no one can say what any family's interest in its background is going to be in the future, especially among later generations. On that basis, I feel it has been worth the effort, and I hope that those who read it now and later will concur in the assumption that it is better that it has been done than not.

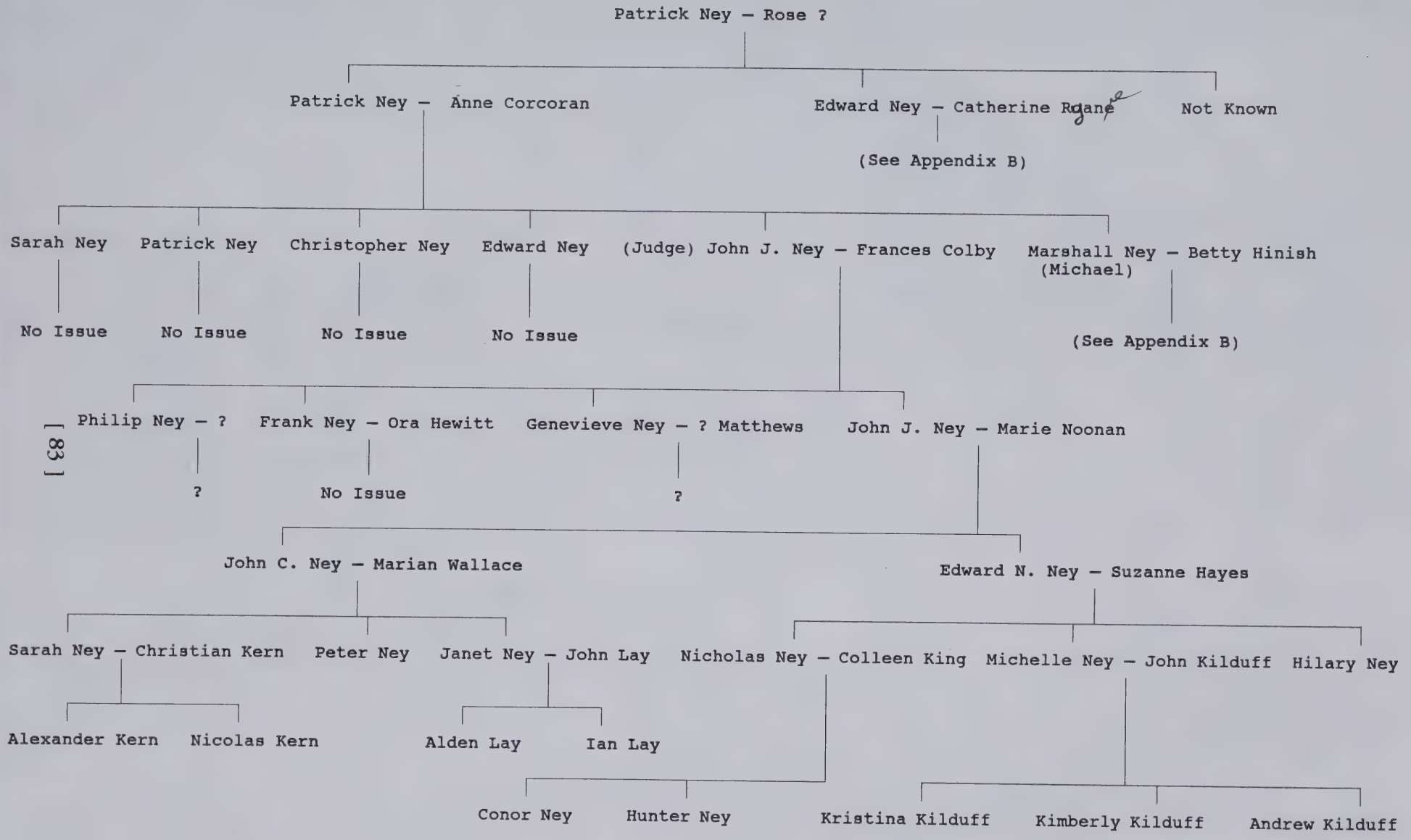
APPENDICES

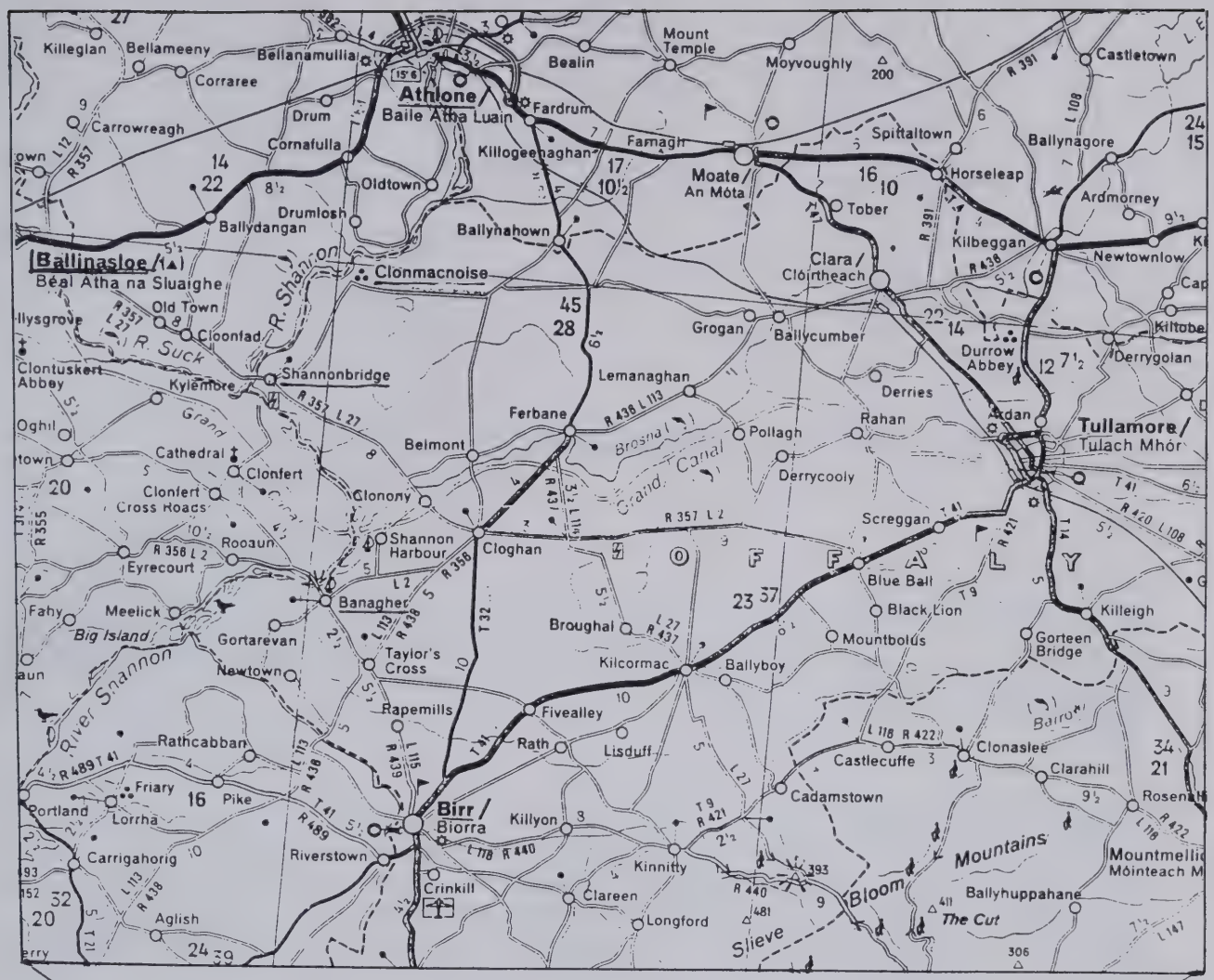
APPENDIX A

On the next page of this Appendix is a genealogical chart showing the Ney family from Patrick and Anne Ney through John C. and Edward N. Ney to the present generation of their great-great-great-grandchildren. Six generations are represented—actually seven with Patrick's parents. The only other two Ney lines from Patrick and Anne are covered in Appendix B.

(It is worth noting that genealogical charts of this type are limited to showing descendants from a single pair of ancestors. However, the young should understand that if the progression is inversed to look backwards from the perspective of the single living descendant, then the fact of having many ancestors is apparent. In this case, instead of being descended from Patrick and Anne Ney alone, each of the Kerns, Lays, Neys and Kilduffs actually have thirty other great-great-great-grandparents.)

On the page following the genealogical chart are two maps — the lower a map of Ireland itself, with a small shaded area showing the location of the Shannonbridge area. This area is expanded in the upper map. Shannonbridge itself can be found in the upper lefthand quadrant just south and east of Ballinasloe. The towns of Birr and Tullamore, both mentioned in the text, are also on the map. The scale is large. The distance from Birr to Tullamore, for example, is only 23 miles.


Patrick Ney — Rose ?
Patrick Ney — Anne Corcoran
Edward Ney — Catherine Ryane
Not Known
(See Appendix B)
Sarah Ney
Patrick Ney
Christopher Ney
Edward Ney
(Judge) John J. Ney — Frances Colby
Marshall Ney (Michael) — Betty Hinish
No Issue
No Issue
No Issue
No Issue
(See Appendix B)
Philip Ney — ?
Frank Ney — Ora Hewitt
Genevieve Ney — ? Matthews
John J. Ney — Marie Noonan
?
No Issue
?
John C. Ney — Marian Wallace
Edward N. Ney — Suzanne Hayes
Sarah Ney — Christian Kern
Peter Ney
Janet Ney — John Lay
Nicholas Ney — Colleen King
Michelle Ney — John Kilduff
Hilary Ney
Alexander Kern
Nicolas Kern
Alden Lay
Ian Lay
Conor Ney
Hunter Ney
Kristina Kilduff
Kimberly Kilduff
Andrew Kilduff


Killeglan
Bellameeny
Bellanamullia
Corraree
Athlone
Baile Átha Luain
Bealin
Mount Temple
Moyvoughly
Castletown
Carrowreagh
Drum
Cornafulla
Fardrum
Killogeenaghan
Famagh
Spittaltown
Ballynagore
Oldtown
Moate / An Móta
Horseleap
Tober
Ardmorney
Drumlosh
Ballydangan
Ballyhahown
Kilbeggan
Newtownlow
Ballinasloe / Béal Átha na Sluaighe
Clonmacnoise
R. Shannon
Clara / Clóirtheach
Old Town
Cloonfad
R. Suck
Grogan
Ballycumber
Durrow Abbey
Derrygolan
Clontuskert Abbey
Kylemore
Shannonbridge
Lemanaghan
Derries
Oghil
Ferbane
Rahan
Tullamore / Tulach Mhór
Cathedral
Belmont
Pollagh
Clonfert
Grand Canal
Derrycooly
Clonfert Cross Roads
Clonony
Screggan
Shannon Harbour
Cloghan
Eyrecourt
Blue Ball
Fahy
Meelick
Banagher
Broughal
Black Lion
Killeigh
Big Island
Gortarevan
Mountbolus
Gorteen Bridge
Taylor's Cross
Kilcormac
Ballyboy
River Shannon
Newtown
Rapemills
Fivealley
Rathcabban
Rath
Lisduff
Castlecuffe
Clonaslee
Clarahill
Friary
Pike
Portland
Lorrha
Birr / Biorra
Killyon
Cadamstown
Carrigahorig
Riverstown
Kinnitty
Mountmellick
Crinkill
Clareen
Ballyhuppahane
Aglish
Longford
The Cut
Slieve Bloom Mountains

Londonderry
NORTHERN IRELAND
Belfast
Sligo
Galway
DUBLIN
IRELAND
Limerick
Killarney
Waterford
Wexford
Cork

APPENDIX B

OTHER NEY LINES:

As noted in the text, there are just two Ney lines in addition to the direct line from Patrick to the Judge to John J. Ney to Edward & John, et seq.

The first is the line from Patrick's only known brother, Edward, which is not traceable past Edward's two sons. The second is the line from Patrick's son, Michael/Marshall, which is traceable to the present day.

The first line: See references in the Ireland section, pages 10-11, and in the Middle West section, page 41, which give all the known information on Patrick's brother, Edward. His obituary quoted in the Middle West section says he had two sons, both railroad engineers. One of them, Michael, was killed in a train wreck in 1888. The following quote is from his front-page obituary in the *Fort Wayne News*, October 2, 1888:

> At an early hour this morning the remains of Michael Ney arrived over the Pittsburg road from a station in Texas, along a railroad on which the man bravely met his death while at his post of duty last Saturday. He was killed in a wreck, and it is reported that he remained at the throttle to the last. The remains are mangled and scalded beyond human resemblance.
>
> Michael Ney lived in this city until about six years ago, and was for a long time engineer on the Wabash, a job that he relinquished soon after the deaths of his parents. Distant relatives reside on Hoagland Avenue, to which place it was intended to remove the remains, but owing to the poor state of preservation it was out of the question. The funeral took place this morning from Peltier's morgue. A brother lives at Detroit.

The Hoagland Avenue relatives and the brother in Detroit are not traceable. Nor is it known if this Michael Ney or his brother had descendants.

Of Patrick Ney's six children, only two, Michael/Marshall and the Judge, had traceable lines, as noted. Two of the remaining four, Christopher and Edward, married but had no

living issue. The final two, Patrick and Sarah, never married, but lived together as bachelor and spinster, running the family farm. Around 1910, they sold their share of that family land and moved to Alamo, Texas, where they had a large ranch, and where Patrick is buried. After Edward's death, the last of the family land was sold.

The second line, from Patrick's son Michael/Marshall, is referred to throughout the text. I am indebted to his grandchildren, Ronald Riaff and June Clodius, for the following information on him:

He was born in 1870 as Michael Ney and died in 1950 as Marshall Ney. Like his brothers John J. (the Judge) and Christopher, he went to law school (at Notre Dame) and earned his degree in 1897. He also held a degree in philosophy from Notre Dame.

He seems to have been more of a Ney eccentric, like Christopher, than a conformist. He evidently never set up a law practice — the expense of doing so has been suggested as the reason — but became a railroad telegrapher. He was based in the tiny town of Lidderdale, Iowa. (Current population, 202.) At the same time, he maintained his wife and family in a large house in Omaha, Nebraska, about 100 miles to the southeast.

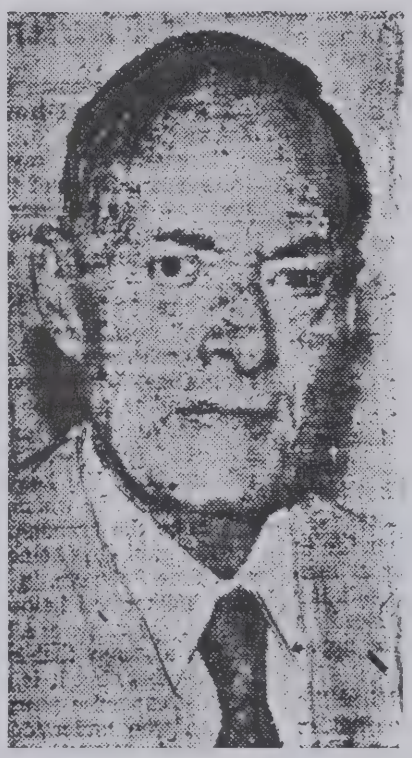
At some point, he had a falling out with a Father Flannigan, later the founder of Boy's Town, and left the Catholic Church. He married a Bessie Hinish, a Protestant, and completed that severance.

It is not known when he changed his Christian name from Michael to Marshall. His grandchildren say, 'We think it was ego,' underlining the connection Marshall wanted to make with the Napoleonic Marshal. (Ironically, the Marshal's Christian name was Michel (Michael), so Michael/Marshall was closer to his hero before his name change than after.) He gave numerous newspaper interviews in his lifetime to claim that his grandfather was a brother of Marshal Ney. In this elaborate scenario, which ties into the parallel Peter Stewart Ney saga, Michael/Marshall said in a 1931 interview nationally syndicated by the North American Newspaper Alliance, 'Marshal Ney was never shot, but escaped to America. To save Ney, a conspiracy was formed in profoundest secrecy. If the truth had come out, [a number of prominent Frenchmen] would have lost their heads . . . My grandfather [the Marshal's brother], fled to Dublin, Ireland . . . where my father, Patrick K. Ney, was born . . . My great-uncle, Marshal Ney, assumed the name Peter Stewart Ney, and for thirty years lived humbly, teaching in backwoods schoolhouses in North and South Carolina and in Virginia. For the same reason [to protect the conspiracy] that he kept silent, so did his brother, my grandfather, and that tradition of silence was handed down to my father and by him to me. But now, after so long a time — it is 116 years since my great-uncle was sentenced to die — I have decided that no longer shall our family rest under the odium of that false stain.' And so on.

In any event, Michael/Marshall disavowed his background with a vengeance, marrying outside his cultural origin and religious faith, abandoning his own faith, and changing his Christian name in order to claim a relationship to a German-French marshal.

As noted, Michael/Marshall's wife, Bessie Hinish, was non-Irish and non-Catholic. Through her, their son Virgil was later to become a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. Virgil also followed her Episcopalian affiliation, and became a 32nd degree

Mason. There is some information already cited on Virgil in the text. In addition, it should be pointed out that he was born in Omaha in 1905, and attended Omaha University before entering the U.S. Army in 1926. During WWII, according to his 1979 obituary in the *Washington Post*, he served, 'as a battalion commander in the Philippines, [and] remained there after the war as a historian on the staff of Gen. Douglas MacArthur. He was also on MacArthur's staff in Japan. In 1947, Col. Ney was sent to Nanking, China, to establish a school for combat historians for the Nationalist army of Chiang Kai-shek. During the Korean conflict, he organized a psychological warfare school for the Korean army and participated in anti-guerilla operations in Cholla Namdo province. After his return from Korea, he wrote a book, *Notes on Guerilla Warfare*, in which he stressed that guerilla warfare was replacing conventional warfare and that new strategies must be developed by military leaders. He then . . . taught at American University, was assistant director in the Army War College program at George Washington University and was with the Special Warfare School at Fort Belvoir. During this period he also earned a master's degree and doctorate from Georgetown University.'



Poor quality on this photograph from Virgil Ney's obit in the *Washington Post*, but it is the only one available. Note the characteristically high Ney forehead.

Virgil had no issue, but his sister, Norma, did. She married Michael Riaff, a musician and country & western singer, and they had two children, Ronald and June, both of whom live in St. Louis. Ronald Riaff and his wife, Elaine (Maire), have two children, Elizabeth and David, and one grandchild. June is married to William Clodius, and they have three children, Kathleen, Kurt, and Karen, and eleven grandchildren. Norma is still alive.

There have been some shifts in religion in this line. Michael Riaff, the musician, was a Jew of Russian descent. After marrying Norma, who had been brought up as a Protestant, he and she became Catholics. But their son Ronald and his wife are Lutherans.

Judge Ney had four children. We know that one of the four, John J., had two children, Edward & John. We know that one of the others, Frank, was childless. We do not know whether Philip ever married or had children. The details of Philip's career are unknown, but it is unlikely that he was successful in any significant way. If he had been, he probably would not have slipped out of sight. We do know that the fourth child, Genevieve, was married to a man named Matthews, but we do not know if she had children, or anything else about her. So as far as is known, the Riaffs and Clodiuses are the only known collateral relatives of the Judge Ney-John J.-Edward & John, et seq. line.

APPENDIX C

FAMILY BACKGROUND OF MARIE NOONAN NEY:

Her father's Noonan line has been covered in the text.

Her mother, Mary Jane Sullivan, called Jennie, was born January 20, 1873, the daughter of Dennis and Margaret (Fitzgerald) Sullivan, and a member of yet another pioneer Upper Middle West family. Jennie died in 1902, and her widowed husband then married her sister, Katherine. Her father, Dennis Sullivan was born in Cedarburg, Wisconsin, in 1844, one of the first white children born in that state. (One of his sisters, Catherine, married Michael Cudahy, founder of the Cudahy Packing Company.) Dennis Sullivan married Margaret Fitzgerald, born in Boston in 1841, in 1869.

This family eventually centered in Duluth, Minnesota, and was quite diverse and industrious. All the children went to college, at a time when that was most unusual, especially for women. Jennie's brothers Dennis, Henry, and William were, respectively, a ship's captain on the Great Lakes, a school administrator, and a prominent Duluth architect. One of her sisters, Rose, was an unusually gifted businesswoman. In old photographs of these brothers and sisters, taken around the turn of the century when they were in their twenties and early thirties, they are remarkably lively and attractive.

I am indebted to Anne (Hawley) Marczak, a granddaughter of Rose Sullivan Hawley, for this information. I myself have personal memory of Rose, Henry, Dennis, and William in the 1930s.

APPENDIX D

SOURCES:

The most important reason for giving these sources and accounts of leads followed is to make sure the work record is there for the future, so that others who may be interested in more investigation will know just what research was done. Such an interest may not seem probable at this point, but it is not possible to know that for certain. And conversely, to quote from the Preface, 'It is certain that if these family records had been established years ago, even as far back as the late 1800s when Patrick K. Ney was still alive and able to remember details of Ireland, this little history would be far more inclusive than it is. By the same token, if this history had not been done now, many of the memories and facts it contains would not be available a hundred years from now for future generations.'

IRELAND:

The Family Center Office, Boca Raton, Florida, an extension of the Mormon Genealogical Record Center, in Salt Lake City.

Mary Borderman, genealogist working at the above office, on a private basis

The Chief Herald's Office, Dublin

Harry McDowell, FIGRS

County of Offaly Historical Society, Tullamore (Anne Coghlan)

Church records in Shannonbridge, Cloghan, Belmont, Ferbane, Lemanaghan, and Banagher, all in County Offaly

Newspaper files covering the above communities, 1820-1840, 1870-1890

James Nee

Frank Ney

The World Book of Neys

Correspondence with the eleven Neys listed in Ireland according to *The World Book of Neys*

THE MIDDLE WEST:

Genealogical Societies in: Connecticut (state and Waterbury), North Carolina, Iowa (Buchanan County — Donnie Cook; Dubuque County), Indiana (in search of possible brothers of Patrick Ney)

United States Government: National Archives, Civil War Records, etc.

Rev. William Scafidi (in regard to records in the old St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City)

Newspapers: the *Des Moines Register*, the *Manila Times*

Buchanan County, Iowa, Courthouse records and personnel

Genealogy Department, Allen County Library (Indiana)

Lars Flickinger, attorney and local historian, Independence, Iowa

Ellen Foland, genealogist, Independence, Iowa

Carnegie-Stout Library, Dubuque, Iowa

Susan North, Ames, Iowa, public library

Irene Crippen, genealogist, Ames, Iowa

Falwell Brown, local historian, Ames, Iowa

State University of Iowa Archives, Ames, Iowa (Doris Simmons)

Law Department, University of Iowa

Marie Goodrich, genealogist, Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Betty Gantt, genealogist, Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Obituaries of Patrick Ney, Anne Ney, Judge John Ney, Christopher Ney, etc.

Michael Riaff & June Clodius (re the Michael/Marshall Ney line)

Records of the Colby family in America

THE EAST:

Papers and records of Edward Noonan

Papers and records of John J. Ney

Personal memories of John Colby Ney, Edward Noonan Ney, etc.

Obituaries of Edward Noonan, John J. Ney, Virgil Ney, etc.

Anne (Hawley) Marczak (the Sullivan genealogy)

TODAY:

Material from various family members

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